356+ MONSTERS AS PC RACES

FREE DUNGEON TILES POSTER

Your Official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Magazine

DRAGON®

WORLD Building

- Run Emmy-winning Games
- Biggest Dungeoncraft Ever: Realm Rules
- Choose Perfect Prestige Classes
- Rethink Religion

5 NEW Monsters

Living Greyhawk®

Brave the Ruins of SPINECASTLE

ISSUE 293

$5.99US $8.99CAN

03

MARCH 2002

0 74808 01823 9

GREAT COMICS:
- Dork Tower
- What's New
- Nodwick

CHAINMAIL:
- Two Unusual Warbands
- History of the Free Cities

PLAY BETTER:
- Sage Advice: Oriental Adventures
- Make Powerful Characters

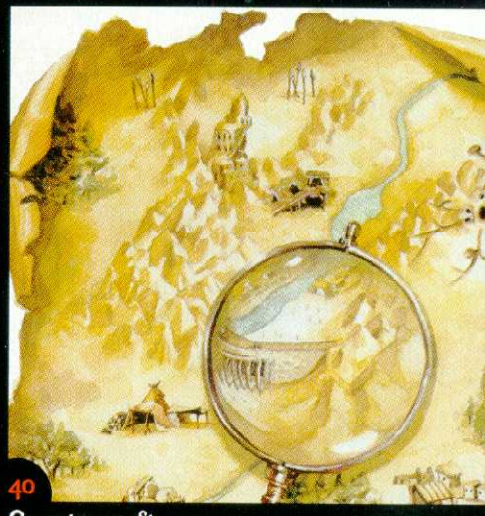
ON THE COVER
Mark Zug, an outstanding artist who's no stranger to the pages of *DRAGON Magazine*, shows us a new vision of world building on this month's cover.

DRAGON
CONTENTS
Issue #293 • March 2002 Vol. XXVII • Number 10

CHAPTER TWO:
FEATURES

28
Small Gods
Rethink religion with these diminished deities.

34
TV Structure
Run Emmy-winning games.



40
Countrycraft
Realm rules—the biggest Dungeoncraft ever!

CHAPTER ONE:
GAME ROOM

06 ....**Wyrm's Turn** (editorial)
Every world is yours.

08 ....**Scale Mail**
The readers speak up.

20 ....**Profiles**
Making a Dungeoncrafter.

22 ....**Up On A Soapbox**
Going nowhere.

24 ....**Dork Tower**

CHAPTER THREE:
FAMILIARS

72 ....**Nodwick**

74 ....**Elminster's Guide to the Realms**
The Missing Minotaur: Be careful what you drink.

78 ....**The Bestiary: Howls of Nature's Wrath**
Five deadly wolves

84 ....**Class Acts**
The Nightsong Enforcer.

CHAPTER FIVE:
WIZARDS WORKSHOP

100 ....**Chainmail**
Freedom isn't easy to find in the Free Cities.

102 ....**Command Points**
Play two unusual warbands.

104 ....**Sage Advice**
Planning a trip to Rokugan? Better consult the Sage.

110 ....**DM's Toolbox**
Create www.yourgame.com.

114 ....**What's New?**

52
Monsters with Class
365+ monster ECLs turn the MM into the PHB.

56
The Elemental Planetouched
The secret life of the genasi.

66
Campaigning with Class
Pick perfect prestige classes for any campaign.

CHAPTER FOUR:
LIVING GREYHAWK JOURNAL

88 ....**Places of Mystery**
Explore the ruins of Spinecastle and the ancient Flan enclave of Veralos. Be sure to pack plenty of healing potions.

92 ....**A Splintered Sun**
Meet the Glaives of Azharadian, a knighthood that serves as the backbone of Onnwal's struggles against the Scarlet Brotherhood. But all is not well with the order. . . .

Loose Canon

Poke around on D&D-related Internet discussion lists, especially those dedicated to an official game setting like GREYHAWK or the FORGOTTEN REALMS, and you're likely to hear a lot about "canon." Canon is best described as official material published for a given game world, the "blueprint" of common facts about a place that serves as the starting ground for all campaigns based in that setting. Canon sets the narrative rules of a given world (gunpowder doesn't work on Oerth, there are no kender on Toril, and so on). It is a sacrosanct set of strictures into which all campaigns must fit.

Canon, my friends, is the enemy.

For professional game designers working on official products, canon is a useful tool to ensure that a book set in a specific campaign world mirrors the "reality" of other books in the same series. If Bane's avatar was killed by Torm during the Time of Troubles in a product released in 1991, an author shouldn't say that Bane died of the deadly Ebola virus a few years down the road.

Canon keeps things consistent. It gives fans a common point of understanding that can form the basis of countless intriguing discussions. When you buy a FORGOTTEN REALMS product, you can be sure it's a continuation of the same setting you've been following for the past several years.

What's useful (even required) of professional designers, however, really has little place at the gaming table. A DM's job is to create a vibrant game world that engages her players and enriches the overall "plot" of the characters' development, from low-level hopefuls to heroes of legend. Using one of the examples above, if the DM thinks it would be fun to outfit her Celenese elven militia with long-rifles and her Sea Princes frigates with massive arrays of gun emplacements, rules from on high that say guns don't work can be ignored. If something that goes against the "official" version of a campaign world seems fun to the DM and, more importantly, if it engages her players, the DM should throw canon to the dogs and march boldly forward with her mad ideas.

No matter how crazy and off the beaten path a campaign gets, however, it should always remain true to its internal continuity. If the players have discovered through their travels that the city of Dyvers lies west of Greyhawk along the Velverdyva River, the city should still be there the next time their group passes by. Just as Wizards of the Coast has an obligation to its readers to ensure that the FORGOTTEN REALMS of next month's release is the same FORGOTTEN REALMS of the late 1980s, Dungeon Masters have an obligation to their players to ensure that the world of their home campaign is the same place it was last Wednesday.

Running a campaign for a bunch of friends isn't about creating a world that must be used by thousands of gamers. It's about a small communal experience that should be fun for the handful of friends involved in the campaign. Anything outside that group of friends shouldn't even come into play. If some blow-hard on an online message board thinks firearms have no place in D&D, let him continue to rant and rave at his monitor while you continue to roll dice with the appreciation of your friends and the wide smile of satisfaction on your face.

Erik Mona
Editor, *Living GREYHAWK Journal*

DRAGON

GROUP PUBLISHER	Johnny Wilson
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF	Jesse Decker
ART DIRECTOR	Lisa Chido
LIVING GREYHAWK EDITOR	Erik Mona
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Chris Thomasson
ASSISTANT EDITORS	Matthew Sernett Stacie Fiorito
DESIGNER	Theresa Cummins
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS	Ed Greenwood Robin D. Laws Christopher Perkins Mike Selinker Skip Williams Ray Winninger
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR	Pierce Watters
ADVERTISING SALES DIRECTOR	Bob Henning
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR	John Dunn
CIRCULATION ASSISTANT	Dawnelle Miesner
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS	David Day Jason A. Engle Phil Foglio Jeremy Jarvis John Kovalic Mike May Tony Moseley Scott Roller Stan Shaw Derek Thompson Aaron Williams Sam Wood Mark Zug Chuck Lukacs

DRAGON (ISSN# 1062-2101) is published monthly by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Ave. SW, Renton, WA 98055, United States of America. Periodicals Postage Paid at Renton, WA, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO *DRAGON*, P.O. BOX 469107, ESCONDIDO, CA 92046.

©2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced (except for review purposes) without the prior written permission of the publisher. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., its employees, or its editorial staff, who are not liable for opinions expressed herein. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. WIZARDS OF THE COAST; TSR; DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; D&D; AD&D; FORGOTTEN REALMS; DRAGONLANCE; PLANESCAPE; RAVENLOFT; BIRTHRIGHT; MYSTARA; SPELLFIRE; GREYHAWK; DARK SUN; SPELLJAMMER; AL-QADIM; COUNCIL OF WYRMS; MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH; MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM; ALTERNITY; STAR*DRIVE; DARK•MATTER; ALIEN COMPENDIUM; FIFTH AGE; DUNGEON MASTER; PLAYER'S OPTION; *DRAGON*; DUNGEON; POLYHEDRON; LIVING CITY; LIVING GREYHAWK; GEN CON; RPGA are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Contact Publishers Creative Systems at **dragon@pcspublink.com** or call 1-800-395-7760. In the UK, contact kay.palmer@tnsofres.com or call +44-18-58-41-4713.

ADVERTISING: Contact Johnny Wilson at 425-687-8130. All ads are subject to approval by Wizards of the Coast, which reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree not to hold Wizards of the Coast liable for any loss or expense from alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements.

Northeastern Advertising Representatives: Sig or Scott Buchmayr, Buchmayr Associates, 137 Rowayton Avenue, Rowayton, CT 06853, 203-855-8834.

Distribution Nationally and Internationally by Curtis Circulation Company, 730 River Road, New Milford, NJ 07646. Tel: 201-634-7400. Fax: 201-634-7499

Open Game Content: Unless otherwise noted, this Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

Printed in the U.S.A.

Scale Mail

SHARE YOUR OPINION

MAIL "SCALE MAIL"
DRAGON Magazine
1801 Lind Avenue S.W.
Renton, WA 98055, USA

EMAIL scalemail@wizards.com
Include your full name and mailing address if you expect your letter to be printed, and let us know how much of that address you'd like printed. (We'll assume city and state otherwise.)

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES

EMAIL Dragon@pcspublink.com
CALL 1 (800) 395-7760

We must be slacking; most of the correspondence we received from readers this month was positive and congratulatory. Feedback regarding the covers and new Table of Contents for issues #290 and #291 has been pouring in. Keep giving us this type of feedback so that we can tell our art director, Lisa Chido, what you want to see. Although many readers wrote in to tell us that they don't play in historical campaigns, many found that they were able to use some of the information from the "Red Sails" campaign setting (issue #290) in their own games, and many were inspired to begin a Dark Ages campaign! And finally, a lot of you have been telling us how pleased you are that LIVING GREYHAWK Journal *is now a part of* DRAGON. *We're happy about this change, too. We like supporting* GREYHAWK, *and we think* LIVING GREYHAWK Journal *offers useful content to all players.*

Doing it Right

I just wanted to tell you all how much I enjoy your magazine. My friends and I have recently switched from White Wolf RPGs to the new edition of D&D. As a new DM, your magazine has really helped me put fun adventures together. I love how every issue has new prestige classes that can be adapted to any campaign (my favorites being the "Hunter of the Dead" from issue #276, and the "Stone Lord" from issue #278). I've just finished reading issue #290, and I must say that the death knight template is incredible! I plan to introduce a new death knight enemy to my group when we meet this weekend.

I found the background information by Gary Holian interesting to read, Rich Redman did an excellent job on the template, and Greg Staples's illustration does a good job of inspiring fear. Will you continue to publish more templates like the death knight in the future?

I also enjoyed the "Rogues Gallery" from *Descent into the Depths of the Earth.* I hadn't heard of this storyline before, but I'm going to have to check it out.

I look forward to your next issue. Thanks for the great work!

Robert Maciel • Ogden, UT

Thanks for the praise. This is as good a place as any to print one correction, however. The primary author for the death knight template was Darrin Drader. Darrin's work was posted on an internal message board, passed around through R&D as they considered using it in a different project, and eventually passed to us.

We'll certainly do more articles similar to the death knights piece. However, by similar I mean cool background and monsters, not credited to the wrong author.

Not So Familiar

After being an avid reader of *DRAGON Magazine* before getting my subscription, I keep expecting *DRAGON* to get better with each and every issue. Instead, I open each issue only to find that every month, another familiar that I'm dying to read is missing! First "Faiths of Faerûn" begins to appear only once in awhile instead of every month. Now, to my absolute horror, even "Dragonmirth" is gone! Even though no one in my group plays in the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, we transplant the prestige classes into our own worlds. Please stop making the familiars disappear! *DRAGON* is beginning to look less and less familiar, and that is, in my opinion, a very, very bad thing.

Jennifer Crowell • Vineland, NJ

Neither of the familiars you've mentioned are going away. "Faiths of Faerûn" has a new regular author, and starting with issue #294, it will be appearing every other month. "Dragonmirth" comes and goes as determined by the page count of the other editorial pages in the magazine. Rest assured, if you don't see your favorite feature one month, it'll likely be there the next. In the meantime, you'll hopefully enjoy the extra pages of the issue's feature articles.

Who Was that Masked Man?

I was extremely excited when I saw the cover for *DRAGON* #290 (December 2001). I am hoping someone could let me know who the artist is, as well as a little bit about the picture. I really like the artwork, but when I looked for the usual photo information, it wasn't on the picture like it usually is. I was hoping there would be mention of it in issue #291, but I didn't find one. Please, please, please take pity on a fan and let me know.

Crystal E. • Address withheld

Well, I guess it's time for oversight number two. The artist's name is Jason Engle. We left his name off of the inside cover reproduction purely by accident. Jason not only turned that excellent art over, but he did it in record time. Jason's art has been featured in several articles, DUNGEON Magazine *adventures, and other d20 products.*

Half-Finished Business

In issue #287, you included an article that had a handful of the planar factions as prestige classes. You guys rock for that! You also don't rock for this one simple fact: That was such a tease!

I mean, come on! Where are the big three (fraternity of order, mercykillers, and harmonium)? What about the godsmen or the bleakers? And where are the dustmen? I'm willing to ignore this minor oversight, but everyone knows that when you start something, you've got to finish it. Will we see this in another issue of *Dragon*, or maybe in an upcoming product?

William Bryan • Portland, OR

Once the first group was done, we thought readers would be better served by tackling other ideas rather than returning to the other factions. In message board discussions, the author has mentioned posting the classes online. Keep an eye on the Dragon *message board at* ***www.wizards.com*** *to learn if that happens.*

On the Level

I am thoroughly enamored of the new edition of D&D, and I have yet to find an issue of *Dragon* that didn't have something in it to pique my interest.

One thing I did not entirely like, however, was the "Leveled Treasures" article from issue #289. While I thought the idea was very cool, the implementation of the mechanics makes no sense to me. It clearly states that to "level" these items, one must possess all feat, spell, skill, race, and alignment requirements necessary to make a normal version of the armor, shield, or weapon, with all of its powers.

If this is read the way I believe it's meant to be, then it automatically excludes several character classes from not only more powerful items, but from even being able to "level" the item at all. How is the fighter in the opening paragraphs of the article supposed to accomplish the empowerment of his beloved *+2 longsword* without multiclassing over to sorcerer or wizard and acquiring the Craft Magic Arms and Armor feat as well as the necessary spells? Classes such as the aforementioned fighter, rogue, barbarian, and monk are excluded (barring diluting their abilities via multiclassing, not the best of options if you seek to excel in a single class), and partial casters like the paladin and ranger will never benefit from these rules as much as sorcerers, wizards, or clerics (and in my opinion are better served by not wasting precious feat selections on the item creation feats required).

It would be easier to simply adventure for the money needed and have a weapon commissioned. Any way you slice it, there are far better alternatives. With some minor adjustments, this system could shine as an alternative method of acquiring magic arms and armor, but the cost of feats, skills, and spells—on top of the experience and gold needed—is, in my opinion, far too high.

Adrian Ewing • Address withheld

The text you're referring to about meeting "all the feat, spell, skill, race, and alignment requirements" is actually under the heading of "Creating Leveled Items." That section describes building a leveled item from scratch, not leveling an already made item. Characters who find a leveled item need only pay experience points to activate the item's greater powers. The only exception to this is that a character can only increase an item's bonus equivalent by +1 for every two levels plus one. For example, you must be 7th level to level an item up to a +3 equivalent bonus.

Throw Them a Bone

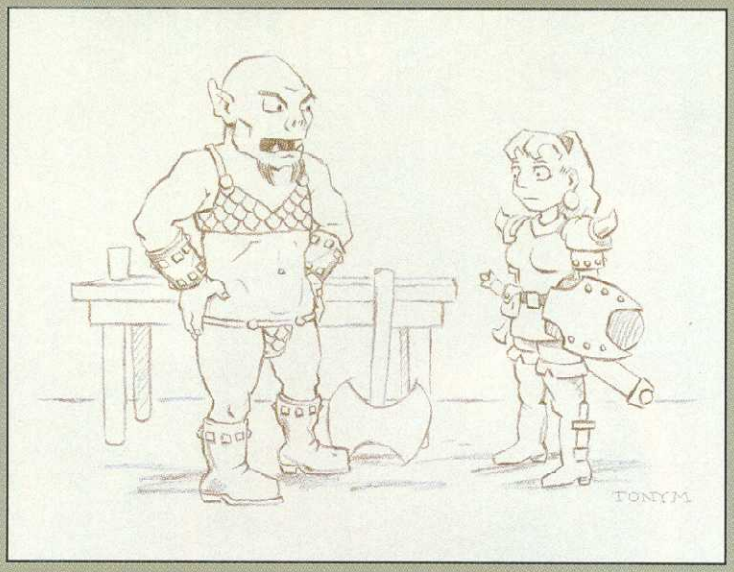
This is in response to "Bones to Pick," the letter nitpicking the new *Oriental*

Game Face

Name: Dave Schuey
Alignment: Chaotic Devious
Class/Level: Bard/Carpenter 12/2
Years Gaming: 21
Favorite Monster: Zombies
Favorite Setting: Planescape
Greatest Gaming Moment: While playing a necromancer defending a castle, I prepared the field around the keep by burying my army of 300 zombies just under the surface. That night, when the attacking army made camp, I gave the word. Talk about rude awakenings.

Show us *your* game face. Send a photo and a brief description of your gaming background, including your "vital statistics" (years gaming, your gaming alignment, favorite race, class, and setting) and a short description of your greatest gaming moment. Keep it all under 100 words, and you just might see your mug right here. Send us your game face by post or email it to scalemail@wizards.com.

caption contest



What's so funny? Why, you are! So send your caption for this cartoon to Caption/Dragon Magazine, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057 by April 1st, and be sure to write "issue #293" somewhere on your entry. Your caption will undergo rigorous testing by the editors, and if it passes, it just might be printed in an upcoming issue. There's no need to cut up your magazine. If you want to include the drawing, send in a photocopy.

Nodwick
by Aaron Williams
WE MADE IT TO THE TREASURE VAULT! EVERYONE START GRABBING STUFF!
NODWICK THE HENCHMAN! YOU ARE THE FIRST MORTAL IN A HUNDRED YEARS TO TOUCH THE RUBY OF ULTINAR! YOU ARE GRANTED ONE WISH! NAME IT, AND IT SHALL BE DONE!
SORRY, RUBY. HE'S A SALARIED EMPLOYEE, NOT ENTITLED TO A SHARE OF THE LOOT. THEREFORE, WE WISH OUR TREASURE HAUL TO BE QUADRUPLED.
MY CONDOLENCES.
THAT'S OKAY! I'M USED TO IT...

Adventures book. The anonymous letter writer complains about several things: the restrictions on mixing eastern and western cultures, the samurai class, and featuring ninjas only as members of prestige classes.

The letter writer wonders why the designers of *Oriental Adventures* couldn't find a way to allow for the mixing of cultures. Why not "allow" druids and bards in an eastern game or sohei and samurai in a western game? The answer to that question is two-fold. First, a DM can do anything he likes, and *Oriental Adventures* makes it easy. *Oriental Adventures* is a D&D game, not a d20 variant, and the races, classes, spells, feats, and skills are completely compatible with a regular D&D game. The reason, I imagine, that the designers threw out druids and bards is because they didn't feel that they had enough examples of those specific character classes in oriental myth or history to justify spending any time on converting them to *Oriental Adventures*. That doesn't mean, for example, that a DM couldn't posit an oriental bard. . . .

As for the samurai, the letter writer complains that he is a "glorified fighter." To that I say good. He should not be better than a fighter, just as barbarians, rangers, and paladins are not better than fighters. A samurai's abilities are flavorful and balanced.

The letter writer is also upset that there is no ninja base class. To me not having a new ninja base class makes perfect sense. There is already a ninja base class—the rogue. The ninja spy prestige class exists for those who want to play someone who lives up to the myth.

The letter writer is not looking beyond the book. The rules make it easy to add or take away classes—so do it. A samurai's abilities and a little roleplaying are enough to make him cool. He doesn't need ki shouts or a find weakness ability. The rogue, as written, is already a deadly, silent assassin. Again, a little roleplaying and he gains some mystique.

Lastly, I'm not going to claim that *Oriental Adventures* is perfect, but a lot of thought and care went into it; that much is obvious from the finished product. Anyone who is tempted to nitpick should realize that there is no way that its designers could satisfy everyone, and for those that are unsatisfied, the designers made it an easily customizable tool. Time spent complaining could be spent changing what one doesn't like.

Phill Calle • Tamarac, FL

Oh Crud

I can't seem to find anywhere else to display my disgust. I have played D&D for over fifteen years. I love the game and have spent hundreds if not thousands of dollars on the books, miniatures, and so on. I even went to see that horribly disappointing movie.

The worst blow to any true, hardcore fan is this 3rd Edition. Talk about dumbing down the best roleplaying game on the face of the earth. The powers that be have taken a game that built on people's imaginations and made you work for your reward and turned it into an idiotic, child-like version of itself. You don't work for your reward, the new spells and psionics are silly, the prestige class is a pathetic addition, and forcing the rest of the gaming world to change everything that they have learned for twenty to twenty-five years is just plain hell.

I have seen the rise of D&D and now, I'm sad to say, I have seen the beginning of the end. All of you have shot your foot and you don't even know it. This is one devoted TSR fan and DM of thirty players that will not buy another product and does not allow any of this crud in the game. Until they start making products that reclaim their honor and glory, I say to all that will listen that this d20 ystem is the destroyer of the greatest game known to roleplaying, and those who use it are not true D&D players and masters.

J. Jackson • Kansas City, MO

Dragon Lite

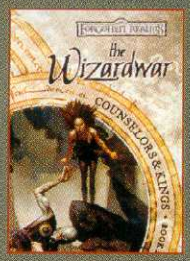
I was wondering if your magazine has been put on a diet recently? I'm asking because issue #291 seems to be the shortest issue of *Dragon* I've seen in a while. How come the page count is down to 114? That's 16 pages less than the previous issue! Are there less pages of advertisement? What's going on? I was imagining that since *Living Greyhawk Journal* has now merged with *Dragon*, we'd be getting even fatter issues. I'm disappointed to see that I

D&D Previews

MARCH

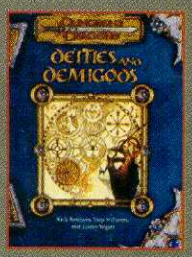
BASTION OF BROKEN SOULS
A D&D Adventure
by Bruce R. Cordell
$9.95/$13.95 CAN
881670000
ISBN: 0-7869-2656-2

THE WIZARDWAR: COUNSELORS & KINGS, BOOK III
A Forgotten Realms Novel
by Elaine Cunningham
$6.99/$9.99 CAN
885480000
ISBN: 0-7869-2704-6

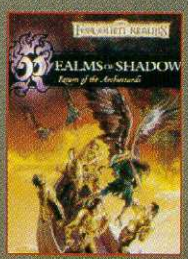


APRIL

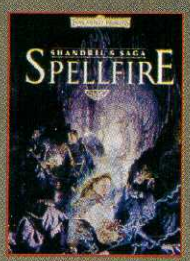
DEITIES AND DEMIGODS
A D&D Rulebook
by Rich Redman, Skip Williams, and James Wyatt
$29.95/$41.95 CAN
881650000
ISBN: 0-7869-2654-6



REALMS OF SHADOW
A Forgotten Realms Anthology
edited by Liz Baldwin
$6.99/$9.99 CAN
885550000
ISBN: 0-7869-2716-x



SPELLFIRE: SHANDRIL'S SAGA, BOOK 1
A Forgotten Realms Novel
by Ed Greenwood
$14.95/$21.95 CAN
887770000
ISBN: 0-7869-1874-8



was wrong. I hope this is a one-time event and not an indicator of a trend in your magazine.

Matthew Avery • Berkeley, CA

The page count of the magazine often varies according to the number of ads we receive. We increase the page count when we have more ads than expected. Increasing the size of the issue significantly increases the cost to make it and the work to build the issue, but we do so to keep content in the magazine. For special issues, we might add pages to fit extra content. Most issues of Dragon *should be 116 pages, counting both sides of the front and back covers.*

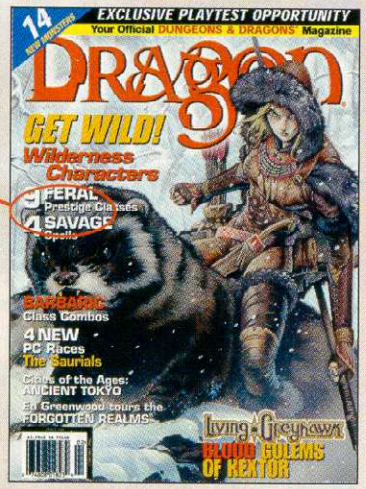
And Speaking of Covers . . .

We made a significant error on the cover of issue #291. Sharp-eyed 1st graders could easily spot that we had less than nine prestige classes in the issue and more than four druid spells.

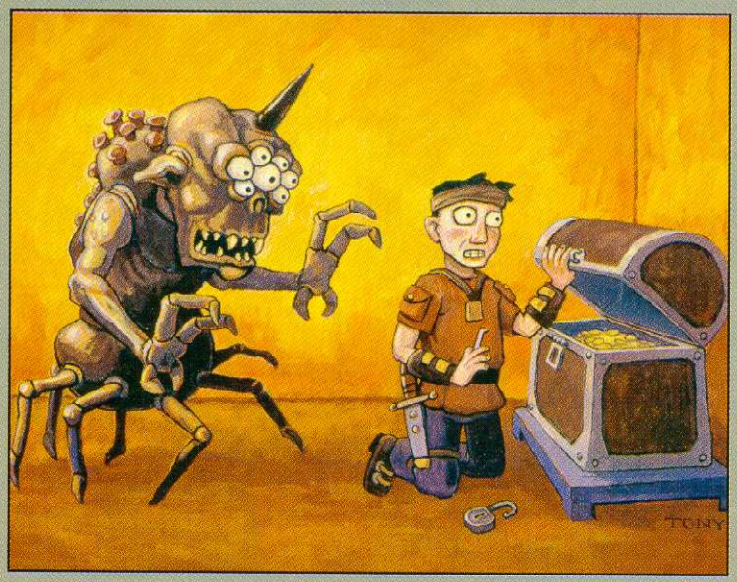
Alas, we slept through Sesame Street and missed our mistake. The two numbers were accidentally switched: Issue #291 had four feral prestige classes and nine savage spells.

And we worked so hard to make those headlines alliterate too. . . .

Our Error



caption contest WINNER



WINNER

"What a laughable trap. Spraying me with butter, herbs, and spices . . ."

Congratulations Sean Keller!
Yuma, AZ

RUNNER-UPS

"What? The +7 longsword of mutant goblin-spider slaying isn't here?" —Thomas Bertorelli

"Now that you solved the puzzle of the box, you have won my hand in marriage."
—Wade D. Huggins

Dragon Magazine #294
Humor and Gods!

It's time for another April issue, but never fear; *Dragon Magazine* #294 has plenty of fun and games, and no-nonsense game content! At long last—vehicle rules! Chariot battles and carriage chases are kids stuff; check out all the rules you need for fantastic vehicle combat. Four Greyhawk gods come to life—their full statistics presented for the first time. Check out the magic vestments and holy relics of the deities from the *Player's Handbook*. Use insults and catchphrases to define your character.

Inside you'll also find "Class Acts," "Faiths of Faerûn," and "Elminster's Guide to the Realms." And as always, you'll find advice, tools, and tactics to improve your game!

$5.99 U.S./$8.99 CAN • Product No. 82294

Dungeon Magazine #91
Kambranex's Machinations

by Robert Lee

A wizard who abandoned his body to pursue his dark experiments is still going strong. His half-machine minions terrorize a mountain village, seeking new victims to join their ranks. A D&D adventure for 9th-level PCs.

Challenge of Champions IV

by Johnathan M. Richards

The sequel to the popular first three installments in this series features another ten challenges put forth by the Adventurer's Guild to find the best adventuring groups in the land. A D&D adventure for all levels.

Sloth

by J. Bradley Schell

When wizards get sloppy, bad things happen—especially when they're in the middle of difficult summoning rituals. A D&D adventure for 7th-level PCs.

Polyhedron
Shadow Chasers

Polyhedron celebrates its 150th issue with Shadowchasers, a complete d20 System mini-game designed by *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* impresario Bill Slavicsek. Evil creatures from a fantastic realm dwell in the shadows, and only a secretive cabal of heroes stands in their way. Will you join the fight? Shadowchasers is your first peek at the d20 Modern rules in development by Wizards of the Coast. Plus d20 industry and RPGA Network updates and more!

$5.99 US/$8.99 CAN • Product No. 82091

Up on a Soapbox

© 2001 Gary Gygax. All rights reserved. by Gary Gygax

All I Need to Know I Learned from D&D
LESSON #7: Direction Sense

A Stairway to Nowhere

About half of the adventure activity in the Greyhawk campaign centered around dungeon exploration and quests. Because several of the expert players chose to negotiate dungeon levels without mapping, I resorted to many insidious tricks—as any DM worth his salt should. Among these was a simple ploy that brought much joy and boundless mirth.

While the extent of Greyhawk Castle's dungeons was daunting, they were also an ongoing attraction to ambitious characters. As the players explored, they sought greater challenges, and usually this meant heading ever lower. Impediments to such exploration included the usual physical traps, elaborate mazes, rooms or passages where magical transference took place, and sloped corridors.

As the hardcore players became aware of such ploys, especially magical teleportation, I decided to try a mix of the ordinary to befuddle their aims. About a third of one level was given over to a special complex, and most of the other passageways through the level accessed this portion so as to invite entry. Inside it, long passages sloped gradually down to a central area where a flight of stairs conveyed the wayfarer back up to the elevation of the surrounding area. However, once inside, the number of direction choices was seemingly far greater, although all eventually led back to the central declivity, the stairway back up. Better still, this stairway could be viewed by a character coming from the "other direction" as one descending to deeper portions of the dungeon labyrinth.

Shortly after I devised this insidious device, the first victim was enmeshed in its toils. The doughty Lord Terik, returning from a successful solo foray, passed upward into the level. There he came upon the easily accessed "trick" area. Following a set of directional options, for example "always north or west," Terik made the circuit several times, climbed "upward" a like number of times to a "higher level," and only after such exertions did he alter his rule, escape the maze that led nowhere, and eventually complete his ascent to the outside.

Assuming that he had been far deeper in the dungeon than was actually the case, Terik led a party of adventurers to the special complex, and then I had the delightful experience of watching a whole group deluded into believing that they were going into the vast deeps of Castle Greyhawk, even as they went around in circles, down stairs, and up ascending passages to take the same steps downward again. After "descending" to what they felt was a near-infernal depth, they altered their route so as to explore. In due course they discovered the encounter areas in the southern portion of the level. "Odd, these monsters aren't very tough for so deep a level."

By this time the poker face was nearly impossible to maintain, especially when on their return they "ascended" the same flight of steps as many times as they had "descended." It couldn't last, though. When they returned again to the place and began an expedition meant to continue downward as far as they could, my mirth betrayed the whole scheme after about a dozen circuits. Their chagrin at being duped was quite sufficient reward for the DM who had to suffer their depredations to monsters so lovingly placed.

There's a two-fold moral to this anecdote. First, the DM can find amusement and delight in the simplest of things. Second, good players will display sufficient dismay as to make the DM satisfied with his success, then get back to the business of trashing the dungeon, knowing that there are only a limited number of clever deceptions available to even the most insidious DMs.

ZOGONIA
BY TONY MOSELEY
WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE? MAKING A LIST?
YES, WERE DIVIDING UP YOUR MAGIC ITEMS.
TONYM © 2001
WHAT?!
DON'T WORRY, DOMATO. YOU CAN STILL USE THEM-- FOR NOW. SINCE YOU'RE NOT DEAD YET. THIS LIST IS FOR WHEN YOU DIE.
OH.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE YOU GUYS WILL USE MY "ORB OF LIFE" TO RESURRECT ME?
KEV SAID WE'D BE TOO GRIEF-STRICKEN TO REMEMBER.
WWW.ZOGONIA.COM

Profiles

by Michael G. Ryan

Craftmaster

The Making of a Dungeoncrafter

After two years, Ray Winninger's "Dungeoncraft" column has become a favorite among *Dragon Magazine* readers. Every month (with a few exceptions), Ray outlines another building block that guides would-be DMs from concept to campaign. Many fans have discovered Ray's step-by-step process to be just the thing they need to create their own worlds or to breathe new life into their current campaigns.

"To a large extent, whether or not you have fun playing D&D is determined by the quality of the DM," he explains. "Unfortunately, DMing is hard—relatively few people are good at it. I've always felt that the best way to get more people playing the game and having more fun would be to create a concrete 'how-to' book of advice for DMs. 'Dungeoncraft' is that same concept in a slightly different form."

The thirty-four-year-old Chicago native has come a long way from his days as a competitive chess player, which led him, at the age of nine, to a local hobby shop/game store in search of opponents. There, he eventually discovered Avalon Hill games . . . and Dungeons & Dragons.

"It's always been my favorite game system," he readily notes. "I did tons of work for TSR, including lots of D&D work, throughout the '80s and early '90s, so I've always had an association of sorts with the D&D team."

Working in the gaming industry wasn't his plan, however. Although he designed many of his first professional RPG products for "the late, lamented FASA" while in college, Ray's plan was to pursue work in the tech sector. However, by graduation, he was taking in a healthy income writing adventures and sourcebooks for a host of game publishers.

"I never thought I'd make a career of game design—I always saw it as a hobby, albeit a lucrative one—but that's just what I did for my first five or six years out of college," he says. Although he eventually made the transition to a career in high technology, he never abandoned his passion for designing games or his association with TSR and D&D.

That consistent proximity to the most popular roleplaying game ultimately led to his current work for *Dragon*, which began four years ago "when I was looking for a small project or two that would allow me to do a little bit of game writing as a hobby while pursuing my 'real' career in technology. I started by taking over the old 'RPG Reviews' column from Chris Pramas before moving on to 'Dungeoncraft.'"

"Dungeoncraft" has now guided DMs through the construction of two complete worlds from scratch and is currently closing in on the completion of setting up the Lost World campaign. (See page 40 of this issue for the largest installment of "Dungeoncraft" ever.) Even before drafting his first column of advice, Ray had quite a bit of experience building worlds this way, from the ground up.

Journeyman

"The first game I remember designing was a futuristic man-to-man miniatures system that had some pretty funky mechanics," Ray recalls. "I picked up a real appreciation of interesting and elegant mechanics from the Avalon Hill games that I've studied and played to death for decades now, so I've tinkered with strange mechanics in most of my games."

It wasn't long, of course, before he tried his hand at designing material for the D&D system, an enormous campaign world that he admits might not have been his best work. "I was fourteen," he says. "In retrospect, it was a very bland, uninteresting world, but as an exercise, it taught me the value of persistence. Although no one would publish the thing, the mere fact that I forced myself to bang out a 400-page

Excavating Underground

Ray has fond memories of his work on his breakout RPG design, Underground, but he candidly acknowledges that some games, no matter how good, cannot survive in certain markets.

"During the Underground era, the audience for RPGs seemed to be growing more interested in games that allowed them to tell sophisticated stories," he points out. "The original intent behind Underground was to create a sophisticated RPG in the superhero genre."

Inspired by moody comic books of the time—Frank Miller's Dark Knight Returns and Alan Moore's Watchmen, to name a few—Ray found his design taking on a life of its own, and its tone began to shift as he worked on the world. "Instead of a dark and somber world like Miller's or Moore's, Underground became a sort of irreverent black comedy and satire of modern morality."

Mayfair Games published the RPG, but their support of the game was somewhat limited. "Shortly after it was published," Ray says, "Mayfair's owners decided to take the company back to its roots and discontinue its various RPGs so that they could produce more board games and card games. It was right about the time that it was becoming clear that the RPG market was starting to get a bit glutted."

Underground found its own modest following, however, and still sells fairly well years later. "In today's smaller market," Ray points out, "an RPG that sold as many copies as Underground would be a phenomenon." The recent revival of interest in the game flatters its designer, who says he would "love the opportunity to further refine and develop that world."

Rayve Reviews

My all time-favorite published D&D setting was Al Qadim, although I liked Dark Sun quite a bit as well. "Dungeoncraft" readers have probably realized by now that I like my settings a bit quirky and distinctive.

—Ray Winninger

manuscript taught me an awful lot of valuable lessons about writing, pacing, and so forth."

His first published RPG product ("a mediocre adventure for FASA's *Doctor Who Roleplaying Game* called 'Countdown!'") didn't exactly make him a household name, but eventually he would make a much bigger impact on the roleplaying community with the publication of his *Underground* RPG (see sidebar) for Mayfair Games in the mid-'90s. Set in 2021, *Underground* allowed players to assume the roles of superhuman, genetically enhanced soldiers fighting a patriotic war to take their society back from a corrupt government. The game spawned a healthy fan base (that continues to this day), but in the aftermath of Mayfair Games withdrawing much of its support of the game, Ray moved on to other projects.

Future Craftsman

Even as he lends DMs a hand with his "Dungeoncraft" column, Ray stands firmly behind a position he took in print in 1995: Computerized games are the future of RPGs. "In some ways, that future is now," he says. "As successful as this latest edition of D&D has been, its audience is dwarfed by the number of people who have played and enjoyed games like *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy,* both of which are direct descendants of the traditional RPGs. Computers have allowed some of the core concepts of RPGs to truly reach the mainstream." (In fact, Ray recommends *Zelda* and its sequel for the Nintendo 64 for RPG players looking for computer games that give the feel of a "really good RPG adventure.")

Naturally, certain RPG-like computer games, despite their popularity, leave Ray cold, although he notes that games like *Everquest* and *Ultima Online* are "unquestionably getting more and more interesting every year." He anticipates a surge of breakthrough products that will be hybrids of computer games and traditional RPGs, games that perhaps "allow a DM to run a very rich D&D game over the Internet for players scattered all over the globe, or some special software that livens up a D&D game played around a table."

Until then, Ray will continue to make his mark on traditional roleplaying through his designs and his columns. After he concludes setting up the Lost World campaign in his "Dungeoncraft" column in this issue, he plans to begin discussing the sorts of problems a DM is likely to encounter a little further down the road, topics like "how do I build effective NPCs?" or "how do I handle movement and encounters in the wilderness?" He has plans to branch out by beginning a column in *Star Wars Gamer,* and he's currently in the early stages of writing a lengthy sourcebook detailing an original D&D campaign setting.

As for his involvement in 3rd Edition D&D, given the freedom to write anything he'd like, Ray says he'd write a rules supplement similar to the old *Unearthed Arcana*—new prestige classes, spells, feats, and skills. And, of course, as is the case with his "Dungeoncraft" column, he'd have a particular focus in mind: "I'd naturally concentrate on new material that would help DMs build more interesting campaigns." D

Thy Quest for Out-Of-Print Games Endeth Here

Buy, Sell and Trade new and out-of-print RPGs, Miniatures and Wargames.

WWW.NOBLEKNIGHT.COM

At the Table: Cavern Tiles

The notes below are meant to help you use this month's poster. In general, we've noted areas that might call for a ruling from the DM and then added a suggested value in parentheses.

Map 1: Cavern Entrance

When using this map, consider the following:

A: Set a depth for the spring. (5 feet)

B: Decide how much the water affects Balance checks made while on the ledges inside the cave entrance. (+5 to DC)

C: Set height difference between the level of the spring inside the cavern and the outside terrain. (7 feet)

D: Set Climb DCs for rocks outside the cavern. (DC 5)

Map 2: Narrow Bridge

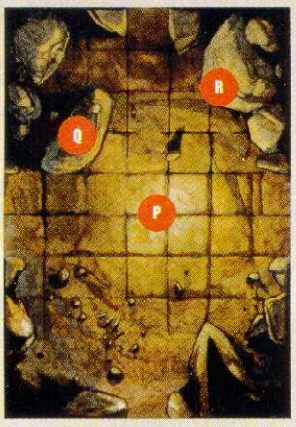
When using this map, consider the following:

E: Decide how much the bridge can hold. (500 lbs.)

F: Set Balance DCs to cross the bridge. (DC 10)

G: Set the depth of the chasm and distance to the water. (3-5 inches to the water, 30 feet to the bottom)

H: Determine the Climb DC to get out of the water. (DC 0)



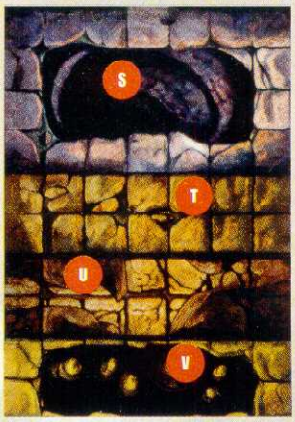
Map 5: Open Cavern

When using this map, consider the following:

P: You can modify this map by placing the tiles from map 4 or map 6 over it.

Q: Determine the heights of the boulders. (5 feet)

R: Decide whether a Medium-size creature can fight on top of the boulder. (Yes)



Map 6: Pits & Passages

Note that this map is actually four separate small sections.

S: Determine the depth of the pit and the Climb DCs of the walls. (40 ft., DC 10)

T: This could slope, or it could represent stairs.

U: Set the Escape Artist DC to move through this section of passage. (Small: DC 5, Medium-Size: DC 10, Large: DC 20)

V: Determine Balance DC to move across the rocks. (DC 10)

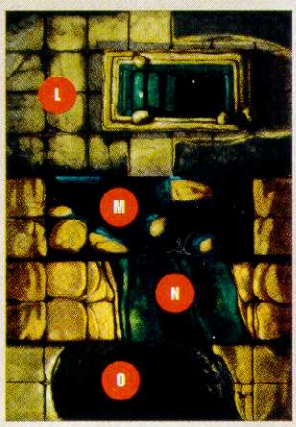
Map 3: Stalagmite Cave

When using this map, consider the following:

I: Decide whether navigating the stalagmites requires a climb check. (Yes, DC 0)

J: Line of sight from either entrance is obstructed, creatures can lie in wait here.

K: This slope requires no Climb check to ascend, but it does count as higher ground during combat.



Map 4: Passages & Pits

Note that this map is actually four separate small sections.

L: Decide how deep the stairs and water go. (30 ft. down to underwater tomb)

M: Determine Balance DCs for fighting from the rocks. (DC 15)

N: Determine water depth and speed. (5 ft. then down to 10 ft. depth, 10 ft. speed)

O: Determine Climb DCs for the pit wall and depth. (DC 15, 30 ft.) Consider having the pit drop into Map 3 or Map 5.

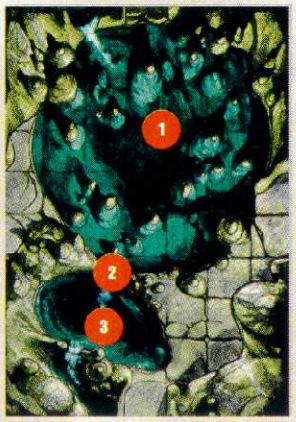
Map 7: Multi-Level

When using this map, consider the following:

X: Set the height of this area. (15 ft. above "Y")

Y: Determine Climb DC or move penalty to go from this level to the higher sections. (Climb DC 0).

Z: Set the height of this area. (20 ft. above "Y")



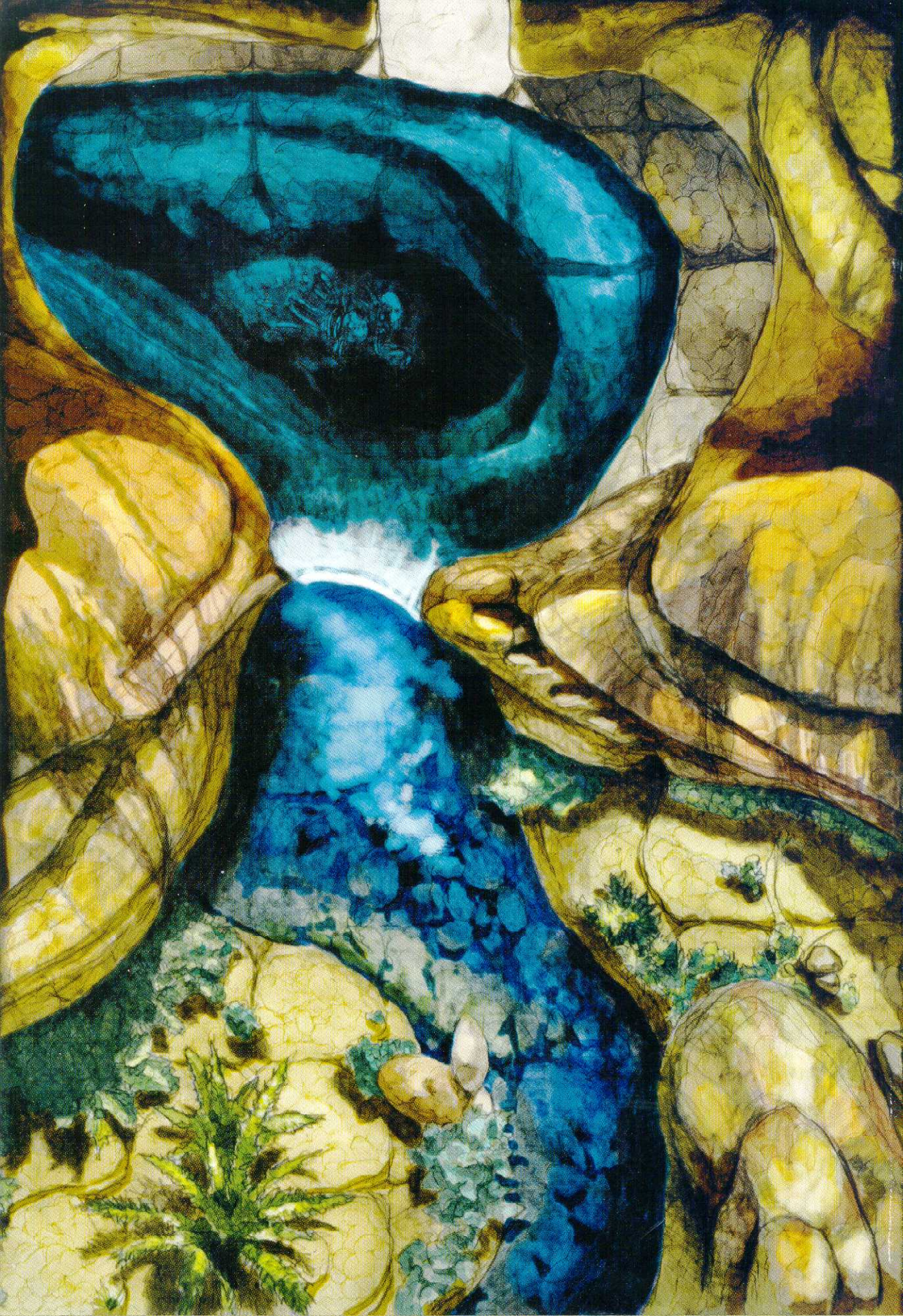
Map 8: Shallow Pool

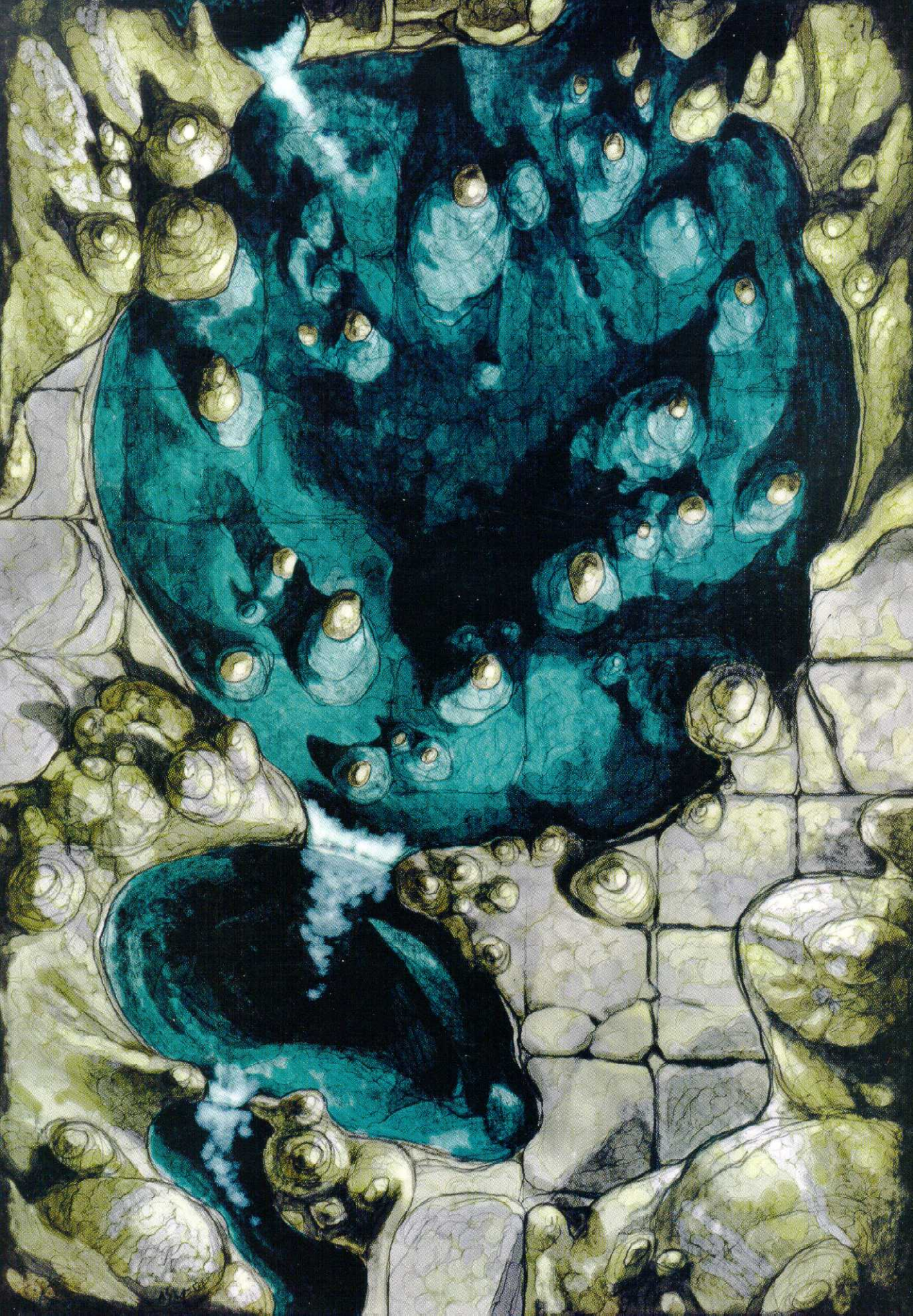
When using this map, consider the following:

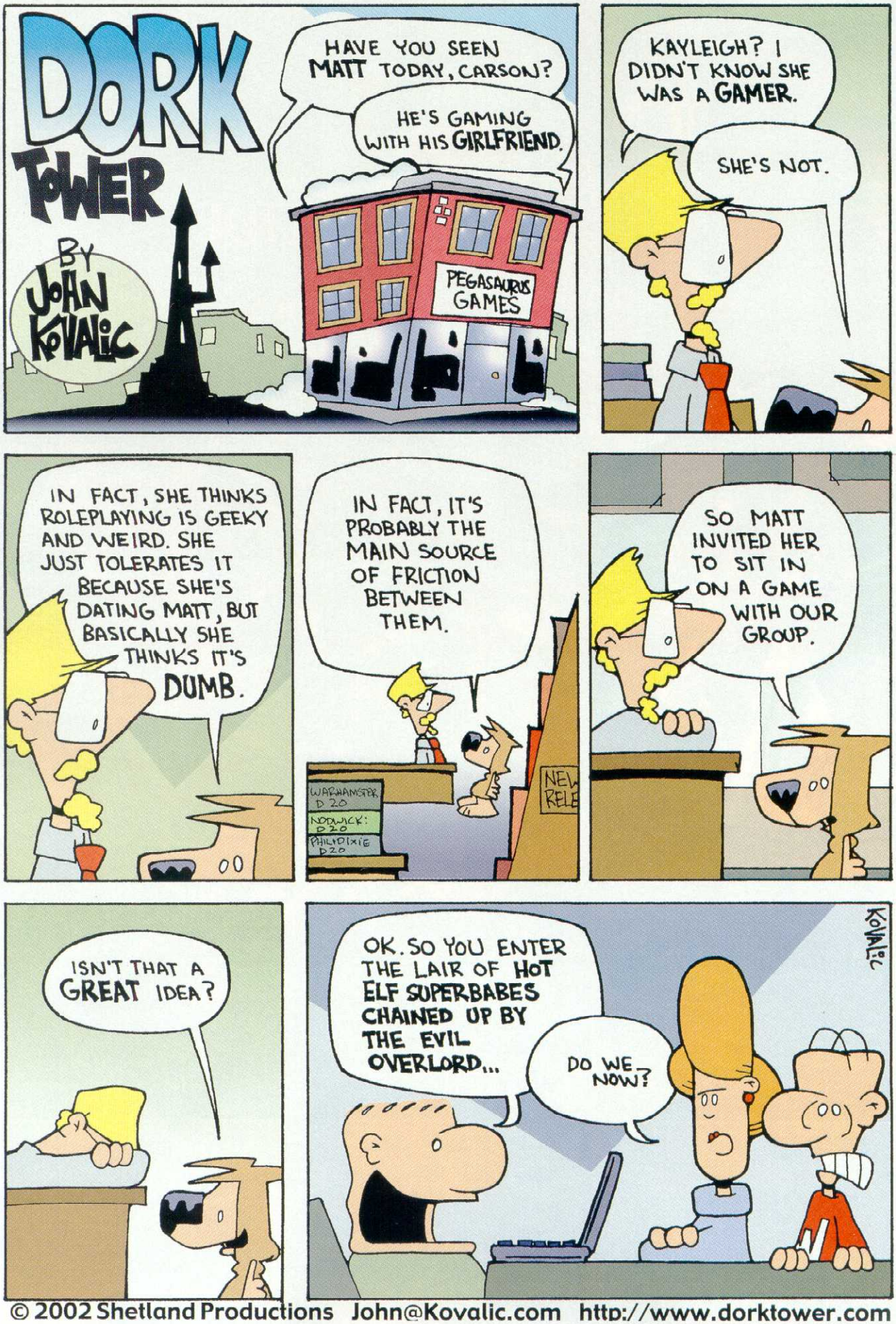
1: Set the depth of the pool. (2 ft., halves movement rate)

2: Set the difference in height between the surface of the pools. (A few inches, little water flow.)

3: Set the depth and difficulty of getting out. (40 ft., Climb DC 0)






DORK TOWER
BY JOHN KOVALIC
HAVE YOU SEEN MATT TODAY, CARSON?
HE'S GAMING WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND.
PEGASAURUS GAMES
KAYLEIGH? I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS A GAMER.
SHE'S NOT.
IN FACT, SHE THINKS ROLEPLAYING IS GEEKY AND WEIRD. SHE JUST TOLERATES IT BECAUSE SHE'S DATING MATT, BUT BASICALLY SHE THINKS IT'S DUMB.
IN FACT, IT'S PROBABLY THE MAIN SOURCE OF FRICTION BETWEEN THEM.
WARHAMSTER D20
NODWICK: D20
PHILIDIXIE D20
SO MATT INVITED HER TO SIT IN ON A GAME WITH OUR GROUP.
ISN'T THAT A GREAT IDEA?
OK. SO YOU ENTER THE LAIR OF HOT ELF SUPERBABES CHAINED UP BY THE EVIL OVERLORD...
DO WE NOW?
KOVALIC

© 2002 Shetland Productions John@Kovalic.com http://www.dorktower.com

small GODS

by Geoffrey McVey • illustrated by Chuck Lukacs

After three days in the ruins of Caulderine, the adventurers escaped to rest in a nearby village. One of their comrades had fallen in battle, so they approached the village elder.

"Is there a temple here, and someone to call our friend back to life?"

The elder shrugged. "I wouldn't call it a temple, really. Not like that big one in Meerton. Fancy place, that. Not much call for that sort of thing here, you know—like my mother used to say, 'Heironeous never did much for the crops, nor Boccob for the lambs.'"

The party leader shifted uncomfortably. "But you have something? A chapel?"

"We have a shrine," the elder says. "My brother tends it. He'll take care of you. Just go down the road there until you see a big old apple tree."

"That's where the shrine is?"

The elder laughed. "No, that's the god."

On the peripheries of the pantheons of nearly any world are a host of minor gods: divine protectors of the land, powerful ancestors, heroes whose deeds have made them immortal, and others. They are rarely well known outside of a particular region or community; some might be worshiped only by members of a single clan or family. Their powers are not as great as those of the better-known gods, and while they usually aren't suited to being the patrons for PC clerics, they can fill in some of the gaps in your world's pantheon. They can also provide you with a whole new realm of plots and encounters.

The various small gods can be categorized into three broad groups: ancestral gods, heroes and saints, and gods of the land. You can think of each of them as a divine representation of a single powerful idea: family, community, and land, respectively. They all have their own qualities and value in a campaign.

Ancestral Gods

Ancestral gods are the revered founders of great families. They might be honored for their heroic deeds (see Heroes and Saints, below), but their primary importance is as the mythic embodiment of a family's history and values. Not every family has an ancestral god; most bloodlines are too young or too diverse in their character to develop the spiritual resonance necessary to invite such a being to watch over them. When a family becomes associated with a particular

trait—a bad temper, skill at magic, tragic romances, anything that would be remembered and repeated in stories—then their ancestral god is said to be with them.

If you want to introduce ancestral gods into your campaign, look at NPC families that have shown strong similarities of personality in the past. Is there a family known for its dragon slayers, its wizards, or even for its villains? If so, an ancestral god could provide a reason for their characteristics.

You could decide that the ancestor was an ordinary mortal, though possibly of some heroic status Alternatively, it could have been a semi-divine being—an animal spirit, a fey creature, or even (very rarely) the avatar of a god. While it lends a clan status to be able to say that one's family began with a god, and there is an undeniable curiosity value in claiming descent from a shapeshifting fox, the nature of one's ancestral god should do nothing to change the abilities of the family attached to it. At best, having a fox ancestor can explain the unusual number of red-haired children born to the family, and their propensity for becoming rogues.

The only family members who can call directly upon the ancestor for aid are the adepts. In each generation, there is usually one person chosen to be the intermediary between the family and its venerated ancestor. That person is expected to learn the history of the family, the traditional prayers to the ancestor, and the right offerings to keep it pleased. In most cases, these offerings take the form of continued remembrance and dedications, but there are stories of evil ancestors who call for more sinister sacrifices to ensure continued protection.

Example Ancestral Gods

Dalcantaea, mother of the Dalcanti clan

The Dalcanti are a respected clan of hill-dwelling barbarians, known for their skill at stalking the deer of their native woods. They credit this skill to the gifts of their ancestor, Dalcantaea, who came from the north to teach the women of the tribe of Uruv how to hunt instead of foraging for birds' eggs like their men. She adopted the best of the hunters as her daughter and passed on the secret of deer hunting together with the clan's name, Dalcanti. Over the centuries, the Dalcanti have preserved their ancestor's memory by offering her the first deer of every season and the antlers of every third stag. In exchange, Dalcantaea grants spells to the family adept and warns the clan of threats to the local deer population.

Gapnagurnung the Father of Many

Travellers venturing into certain goblin-infested lands might begin to notice stakes decorated with the polished skulls of many small animals. This is a sign that they have entered the territory claimed by the Gurnung tribe, who are noted for their seemingly limitless numbers and their dedication to their ancestral god. Gapnagurnung is not an especially helpful ancestral god; the adepts serving him (and there are a surprising number of them, though none of any significant power) claim that the god did all that was required of him simply by ensuring that there were so many Gurnung goblins in the world. He does, however, provide spells to his adepts, and sometimes he warns his children of approaching danger by rattling the skulls of his offering-stakes.

Tumblemoon

The rabbits of Nimblegrove tell the local gnomes and druids that they are all descended from Tumblemoon, the divine rabbit who taught them to leap and run better than any other rabbit family. Of course the rabbits themselves have no priesthood, but there are a handful of gnomes who say their prayers to the goddess and leave offerings in the woods. One has even gone so far as to dedicate herself to Tumblemoon, and has been rewarded with the powers of an adept; she uses these talents to help the local rabbits, who show their thanks by acting as her scouts and messengers.

Ruslant the Unsleeping, Patriarch of the Valkurmos family

The wealthy Valkurmos family has maintained a strange and secret tradition for the past six centuries, one that they believe has preserved their fortune and influence. Each generation, the eldest son of the Valkurmos is chosen to be the keeper and servant of Ruslant, an ancestor whom the gods granted immortality, but whose body continued to age to the point of being a helpless shell. The task of the keeper is to entertain the restless soul and bring it news of the mortal world; in exchange, Ruslant shares some of the knowledge that he gained both in his mortal life and afterwards. Ruslant cannot as yet grant any supernatural powers to his devotees, but his abilities appear to be increasing with each generation, so it might only be a matter of time.

Heroes and Saints

Heroes and saints are the small gods who are important to the community, rather than a particular landscape or family. The difference between a hero and a saint depends on the society, but generally heroes are remembered because they embody the values of their culture while saints embody the values of a particular religion. The difference between the two can be minimal (in our own world, think of St. George or Joan of Arc, both pious and brave), or dramatic (for instance, some of the divine emperors of Rome were neither pious nor brave). Their general function, however, can be described in similar terms.

Heroes are associated with a particular quest or an important deed that sets them apart from ordinary people and that was important enough to their culture to start a cult dedicated to their memory. The divine hero's quest could be any sort of adventure, although the details of the story have been "smoothed out" with the passing of years. No one remembers just how the hero sprung back to life after an apparent defeat; maybe a god intervened, maybe a friendly cleric aided him with spells, or maybe it happened because the hero carried a powerful magic item. The reasons matter less than the impact of the event on the story itself, although you can craft a plot around characters trying to discover the truth behind a hero's legend. For example:

- The legend of Malmakuta tells of a heroine's battles against a strange army of shapeshifting ogres and credits her victory to the aid of her wondrous golden lance and her half-brother, Bandesintu. Creatures resembling the ogres of legend have started

appearing in the area, and the player characters must try to find out whether it is Malmakuta's lance that is the key to victory, or some knowledge held by Bandesintu.

• A gnome lullaby mentions "Bamble with the ring of eyes, Zamble with the ring of lies" as a pair of clever heroes of the distant past, but little else is known about them. In one tiny village, though, there is a shrine dedicated to the two, and the keeper of the shrine has memorized the long epic poem of their deeds. The party is dispatched by a curious scholar to find this shrine and bring back the details of the poem.

A hero's cult keeps the importance of the hero's deeds alive in the community. The cult might recreate the hero's deeds through theatre and pageants, or it might encourage people to go on pilgrimages that follow the hero's travels across the land. Some cults might hold games and contests to commemorate the hero's best qualities. Activities like these are a ready source of scenarios for you as the DM: Contests of wrestling, storytelling, archery, riding, or magic can give your players a chance to test their characters' abilities for the chance at a reward. Depending on the cult, that reward might be a free spell cast by the adepts of the god, a symbolic item (a masterwork bow, a horse, or a rare scroll), or simply a year's worth of fame.

Devotion to saints is usually more sedate, but not always. On holy days, as with the festivals of hero cults, there are retellings of a saint's life to teach the story and morals of the saint to audiences. Many saints spent their mortal lives as clerics, druids, or paladins, and so the miracles associated with them are often similar to spells of divine magic. One saint's shrine might bless farmers' plows, while another provides healing, and a third helps parents find lost children. To keep saints' powers distinct from the abilities granted to ordinary clerics, try to give each saint at least one (and no more than two or three) unique or variant spells that it grants to its adepts.

Heroes and saints can be of any alignment, but since they are usually the paragons of their race, their

In Your Campaign

When adding small gods to your campaign, the first question you must answer is, "Why are they there?" This is a metaphysical question not just about the cosmology of your world (though there is certainly that to consider as well) but also about the role that these gods could play in your game. Because most of them are tied to or concerned with only a very small part of the world, they are generally not suitable for use as patron deities for adventuring clerics. Besides, they lack the power of the major gods: their servants are usually adepts rather than full-fledged clerics.

If these aren't gods for players to choose, then why have them? First, to give character to the hundreds of small villages that have developed their own traditions over the years. Rather than having every farming settlement have a shrine to Pelor, let them have gods that are unique to their needs. By writing a few sentences about the local gods, you can give an entire village personality, making each place the PCs visit memorable.

Consider the difference between these two communities: one reveres the ancient heroine who led its founders through the mountains to their new home, fighting off winter wolves and trolls to protect a handful of families; the other is dedicated to the god who manifests himself in a spring of pure water. In the first community, perseverance and hospitality have become virtues for which the people are renowned. In the second, stories of the god's healing powers are turning the small hamlet into a destination for pilgrims and a haven for alchemists, testing the patience of those who believe that the blessings of the spring are meant to be part of their personal relationship with the god. Each place has its customs shaped by its gods. As a DM, you can use those customs to lend color to the local NPCs. Better yet, you can use them as starting points for new plots.

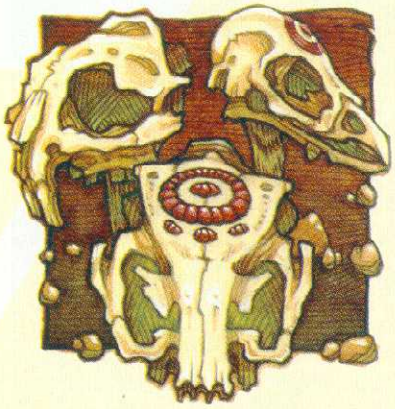
If you like to play in a world where magic is plentiful, then these kinds of gods can act to bring divine magic into the deepest wilderness or the most humble settlement. For example:

• A god who manifests as a vast jungle tree has *awakened* (as the druid spell) several monkeys to be his messengers and priests. While an adventuring party is passing through the area, a monkey approaches them and demands, in broken Common, an offering for the god.

• A dwarven hero-god has a smithy as his shrine. The hero's descendants have a reputation for being able to craft powerful weapons at the shrine, weapons that have turned the tide of more than one battle. Now, however, the last descendant has gone missing, and it is up to the characters to find her.

• Rumors of a small pond that cures all ills attracts the attention of a dying merchant, who pays adventurers to lead him there. When they find it, they are told that the water is a goddess who heals only members of local families. Undeterred, the merchant tries to buy his way into a marriage, using the PCs as his negotiators.

• The halflings who visit the god Angwa (see Example Gods of the Land) entomb their revered heroes in the depths of the cave. A rogue persuades the party to help him loot the cave, telling them only that a "savage tribe" leaves its dead and their treasures there. He either does not mention or (more likely) does not realize the supernatural nature of the cave itself.



alignments often correspond to the ideal for that race.

Gods of the Land

Gods of the land are deities whose powers are tied to a particular place, usually an important feature of the landscape. Like dryads, they have a home—an ancient tree, a mountain, a waterfall, and so on—but differ in that their home is also their one and only avatar. The rowan tree that villagers decorate each spring is not a symbol of the god that protects them, it *is* that god. How such a thing came about is for you to decide: The god might be a cast-off avatar of a greater power, still possessed of some abilities but largely unaware of its origin. It might also have been generated by the landscape itself, awakening into divine sentience. Even though these gods only have a single avatar and could, in theory, be destroyed, it would require the destruction of every trace of the material body that they inhabit. It is unlikely that a mortal could disturb a mountain-god, and even a tree-god could regrow from a single stray seed or leaf if its old body were to be destroyed.

Most of these sorts of deities are found deep in the wilderness, known only by forest-dwelling creatures, druids, and rangers. Their existence is a matter of legend to many, and those who know about them are generally secretive and protective. The inability of such a god to move can sometimes give its devotees the impression that it is vulnerable and in need of defense. Accordingly, shrines to the gods of the land can be very well hidden. Because their keepers rely so much on concealment, a person who manages to find a shrine more often than not finds it empty and unguarded—except for the god itself. Depending on the nature of the god, the offerings found there might be simple (fruit, flowers, and interesting stones), disturbing (skulls and other bones), or tempting (a handful of uncut gems or nuggets of precious metal). Would-be thieves quickly discover that they are not alone.

A few gods of this kind have manifested closer to mortal settlements, or have had settlements grow up around them, and they are more likely to receive regular offerings. In addition to the natural offerings, a god close to a village might receive some local products as sacrifices: a keg of ale, bolts of cloth, a few weapons, or even some coins. Some offerings could be buried, and in the case of the god of a lake or river, they might be cast into the water. Shrines to these gods are an open and visible part of the settlement's life, unless the god is of an evil alignment.

The concerns of these small gods are local. Their interest and attention rarely extends more than a few miles from their home, and they tend to pay attention only to those supplicants or devotees that are in their immediate presence. They might treat the inhabitants of the surrounding area as favorite grandchildren, or they might take little or no notice of them at all. The temperaments of the gods are an aspect of their material nature: a mountain goddess can be unimaginably slow to react to anything around her; a river god could be playful, lazy, or treacherous depending on the nature of the current.

Using the Small Gods

Gods of the land are good for quest- and exploration-style scenarios. The

Example Heroes and Saints

Saint Jalnir the Gentle

This half-orc saint devoted himself to the service of Pelor centuries ago after being ostracized from his orc tribe. Stories of his piety and courage against the prejudices of both humans and orcs spread far even in his lifetime, and after his death he developed a small but loyal following of like-minded believers. Shrines dedicated to him are found in several larger cities, and his adepts teach understanding between and compassion for members of other races. They are especially noted for their ability to calm conflicts and are often asked to be diplomats between races.

Eliandra Solmeydis

Elven bards tell the tale of this heroine of their race, known not for feats of strength or magic, but of memory. She was a famed poet and storyteller, a traveller between elven settlements with a gift for perfectly recalling any tale that she had heard. Over the span of her long life, many younger bards came to Eliandra to ask her to recall for them the legends of lost or fallen lands. She is remembered now at a single shrine whose keepers preserve, by memory alone, as much of the lore of the elven people as they can, passing it on from generation to generation.

Barkhad the Unmoving

Sadly, many dwarves have forgotten this hero of their race, although they regularly see his image carved into the doors of fortresses. He was an engineer and a warrior who, seeing that a gate he had crafted was giving way under attack, took its place and held off a small army of drow for nearly three days. Now, he is honored by a small sect of engineer-adepts, who perform special rites to ask his blessing on the gates they make.

Saint Handraleo the Swift

Among the women who have chosen to serve the god Heironeous, the name of Handraleo is held in high regard. She won fame first by entering the ranks of the god's paladins at an unusually young age and later by a life of matchless dedication to the ideals of honor and justice. She is remembered now by a small sub-sect of Heironeous's followers (the Order of the True Strike) and by the contests held every year on her festival day. Commemorating the completion of Handraleo's best-known quest, the Waking of the Storm, devotees gather every year at a mountain shrine and compete in four days of tournaments and horse races. The winner is declared Handraleo's chosen and given the use of one of the saint's relics for the following year.

Example Gods of the Land

Angwa, the Cave of Whispers

Located near the top of an isolated mountain, Angwa is both a god and a place of burial. For centuries, a tribe of halflings has made the trek up the mountainside to lay their honored dead in the Cave of Whispers, to listen to the voice of the cave in times of danger, and to ask for miracles. Angwa is a proud god and will help his people only after they make lengthy apologies for the time that has passed since their last visit and provide him with entertaining tales. He communicates through the dreams of those who sleep at the entrance to the cave and usually has only a single adept (who lives on the mountain) at any given time.

Lomeriseh, the Rainbow in the Stones

At the heart of an ancient and ruined city, now overgrown and inhabited by a tribe of primitive elves, are the remains of an intricate mosaic known as Lomeriseh. The mosaic, which stretches out over thirty yards in each direction, is made up of a seemingly abstract array of magic tiles. It is an artifact whose purpose is now forgotten, and which has achieved a level of sentience and power that allows it to influence the environment around it. The elves worship the mosaic as a god, praying to it for good weather, protection from their enemies, and healing—all of which the artifact can provide. It, in turn, is very protective of its people and will not hesitate to intervene if they are threatened.

Ydernac, Grandmother Oak

The roots of this venerable tree pierce the stones of a mountain and curl around a tiny subterranean grotto. It is there that the local dwarves go to pay their respects and ask for healing. Nearly every visible inch of Ydernac's roots are inscribed with prayers and thanks in minute dwarven runes, and her grotto is filled with offerings in the form of cleverly carved tokens of people the goddess was responsible for healing. The site is popular with dwarves from many settlements, and there are usually several adepts tending to Ydernac's shrine at any given time.

Golden Danescine

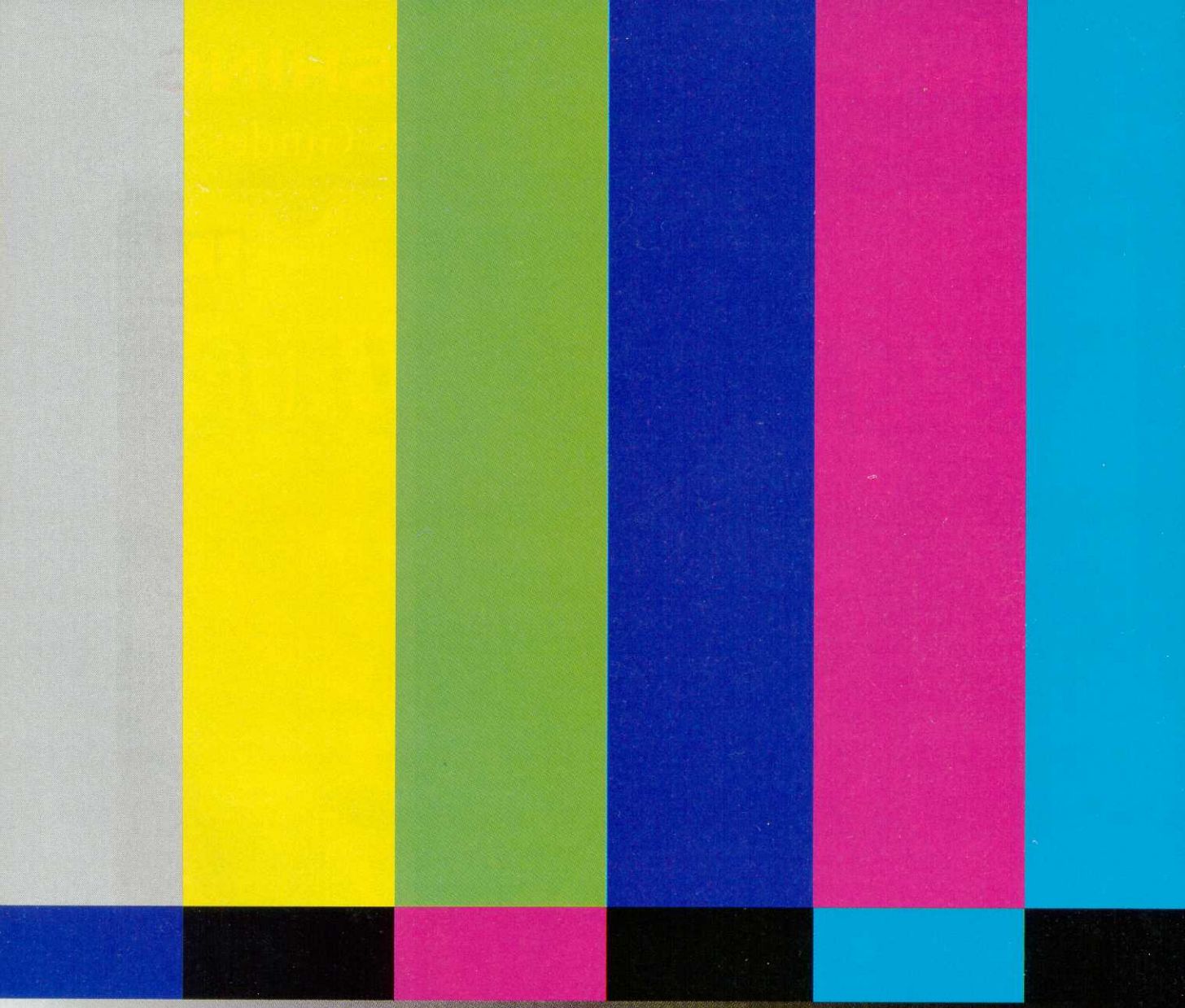
At the edge of a humble village, well away from the rest of civilization, stands a pear tree that always bears at least a handful of pears, regardless of the season. This is the god Danescine, who is quietly revered by the locals for the healing powers of his fruit. Danescine makes few demands as a god: only that the villagers live in peace and that they sing to him from time to time. These requirements are communicated by his adepts, who are always children, and who lose their gifts when they reach adulthood. The people of Danescine are quite willing to abide by the god's rules in exchange for health and long life, but they do their best to make sure that outsiders never learn of their good fortune.

characters might hear reports of a goddess who helps those who visit her. The difficulty is finding her and convincing her that they are worthy of help.

Ancestral gods are better suited to adventures that revolve around the fate of a single family. They are the common element that binds the fortunes of a great family together, both representing their essential character and lending them strength for as long as they are united. Family-oriented stories with themes of betrayal, separation, and reconciliation can be motivated by a strong ancestral god; if the god is evil, you could have an excellent source for a horror plot.

Heroes and saints can be a source of adventures through the legends that communities tell about them. You could even run a scenario about the quest to have a village saint recognized by the local hierarchy. The process could involve anything from finding evidence of the saint's intervention in the world (through granting spells to an adept, or causing miracles directly) to bringing the saint's body back to the village for a proper burial.

Remember that while these gods lack the power of other members of the pantheon, their followers are at least as devout. The local and familiar nature of the small gods can be very comforting to their worshippers, who enjoy the feeling that there is a god in the world just for them. Although your players' characters are more likely to follow deities of greater status, who is to say that someone might not find more inspiration in the ways of a legendary hero or humble saint? D



T.V. STRUCTURE

NEXT WEEK, on an All New Episode of . . .

by Robin D. Laws • illustrated by Jason A. Engle

There comes a time in every campaign when the DM is faced with a difficult choice of possible plot developments. When you come to these crossroads, it's a good idea to ask yourself: "What would happen if my campaign were a television series?"

Making your campaign more like a TV show does not mean throwing all logic and continuity out the window. It does mean that many groups would have more fun if their DMs picked up some of the more successful tricks of the so-called "show runner," the producer whose job it is (among other things) to give shape to a season of episodes and keep viewers tuned in for more.

This article shows you how to model an entire campaign on a season of episodic TV. Some of these ideas might seem a bit odd at first, but you don't have to use all of them in order to draw inspiration from the experiment.

The Series Bible

While developing a show for presentation to the networks or syndication companies, the series creator first develops a document called the "series bible," which lays out the basic premise of the show. This can be a very tight formula that every episode follows or a looser series of notes on theme and tone. Creating a bible for your campaign will help you stay focused and on-track when designing upcoming game sessions. Parts of the bible will also serve as beginning information for your players about the campaign world, helping them to create an appropriate background for their characters.

Before beginning your campaign's bible, there are a number of aspects to consider.

Formula

Your formula is a sentence or two explaining what the characters do each session. Below are three formula examples:

- **Undead Hunters:** The characters are undead hunters who track down escapees from the land of the dead, destroying them or returning them to the underworld.
- **Wasteland:** The PCs are ex-mercenaries wandering a war-torn wasteland, protecting the helpless from bandits and offering aid to survivors of the great conflict.
- **Freedom Fighters:** The PCs are freedom fighters aiming to overthrow a cruel usurper and put the rightful ruler back on the throne.

Formulas can be open-ended or goal-oriented. An open-ended formula envisions an ongoing situation, one in which the main characters keep performing the same job from week to week. There will always be a need for someone to perform this task, and for now, it's your players who do it. Cop shows, like *NYPD Blue,* are generally open-ended. Particular detectives come and go, but there are always crimes to solve and criminals to catch. Goal-oriented shows revolve around an extended mission, which if ever completed, would end the series. Often they revolve around a situation trapping the main characters: *The Fugitive, Quantum Leap, Sliders, Voyager,* and *Gilligan's Island* use a goal-oriented formula. You can also combine both formulas. For example, *The X-Files* started with both open-ended (investigate the paranormal) and goal-oriented (find Mulder's sister) elements.

On television, goal-oriented shows are risky. How often can you make the audience believe that the goal is on the verge of being achieved, without actually ever reaching it? This type of formula probably works better in roleplaying games than on television, because you don't need to worry about stretching your campaign out for an unknown number of years. If your campaign only lasts for six months or a year, that's fine. Once it is finished, you can always develop a follow-up series involving the same characters but with a different formula.

In the formula examples above, the Undead Hunters scenario and the Wasteland scenario are open-ended. The Freedom Fighters scenario is goal-oriented; the series as we know it ends if the PCs ever reinstate the king.

Theme and Tone

Your theme is the central idea that the series explores. It should be broad and simple. Themes can be expressed as pairs of opposed ideas (civilization versus freedom), as statements (there is nothing nobler than helping your fellow man) or as questions (what is the true meaning of heroism?).

Here are some theme ideas for the three formula examples given above:

- **Undead Hunters:** Some boundaries should never be crossed.
- **Wasteland:** Can people atone for terrible things they've done in the past?
- **Freedom Fighters:** Bravery versus injustice.

The tone is the mood you want to establish: Do you want a lighthearted romp or a grisly horror show? The tone might be obvious from the theme you decided upon, or it might need further elaboration.

Let's consider the examples we've been working with. From the setting and theme we've decided on for the Wasteland example, it's probably best to give it a grim, serious tone. The other two could go a number of different ways. Let's give Freedom Fighters an old-fashioned swashbuckler feel and Undead Hunters an exaggerated, black humor tone, with over-the-top action.

It is easiest to derive your theme and tone by looking at your formula. However, you can always start with the theme and tone, and work backward to create a fitting formula. Experiment and find the way that works best for you.

In your series bible, be sure to carefully spell out your theme and tone. This enables your players to create PCs that fit the mood you're aiming for.

Production Design

Even in its earliest stages of conception, a show's creator specifies in general terms what he wants it to look like. He hires a production designer to create sketches and, if the show goes into production, builders create sets based on the designer's drawings.

In a similar but less expensive way, flesh out the look of your imaginary television series. The more you trigger your players' visual imaginations, the easier it is to draw them into your campaign. Describe, in visual terms, one or two key locations where the characters can expect to spend much of their time. If this really were a television series, these would be the permanent sets, like the magic shop in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or the bridge deck in *Star Trek: Voyager.*

Once you've decided on the look of your "show," comb through comics, RPG books, videos, and fantasy novels for pre-existing images to show the players what your world looks like. If you are confident of your artistic abilities, you can do it all yourself. If not, just rely on reference materials to illustrate the look of your campaign world.

Based on the themes and tones we chose above, we could show our players some Moebius graphic novels and H.R. Giger art books for the "Undead Hunters" campaign. For the "Wasteland" campaign we could show scenes from the movies *Yojimbo* and *Road Warrior*. We decided that the "Freedom Fighters" campaign would have the feel of an old swashbuckler movie, so we could show clips of old Errol Flynn movies or one of the many film versions of *The Three Musketeers*.

Character Creation

One of the most important tasks of a television show creator is to invent vivid, interesting characters who can generate plenty of storylines and to find the ideal actors to bring those roles to life. For a game, you must turn over that all-important task to the collective creativity of your players. Give them your campaign bible, which lays out the formula, theme, tone, and production design. Then, ask them to create characters that fit the formula and make sense for your world.

Your campaign or "series" is going to be an "ensemble show." This term refers to a show that has a large cast of characters, all of whom get almost equal airtime. If you want one character to stand out as the star who leads the others, give that coveted spot to a good roleplayer you can count on to show up most of the time. For instance, you've settled on "Undead Hunters" as your campaign. Luke plays his characters enthusiastically and rarely misses a game session. You tell him to play the squad leader, with the rank of Captain in the Hell Squad. Keep in mind that choosing this option can lead to disgruntled players who feel left out and unappreciated, so even if you have one "star," be sure to give equal time to the others and focus some sessions on their characters.

Each PC must have a good reason to be hunting undead, searching for atonement in the wasteland, putting the rightful king back on the throne, and so on. Tell the players to spell this out in their characters' backgrounds. In an episodic campaign, you want the players to think of their PCs as TV-show characters. To take things a step further, you can suggest that your players "cast" their PCs by choosing actors (or a well-known role, such as Buffy or Seven of Nine) to play their characters in your imaginary television show. For homework, you might consider asking your players to

UNDEAD HUNTERS CAMPAIGN EPISODE CHART

Debut	Premise
Ensemble	Xorox returns from disgrace to take over the Hell Squad as a zombie army overwhelms the city.
Focus: PC #1 (leader)	The Undead hunters track a ghost who can leap from body to body.
Focus: PC #2	Stella's overeager niece scores a junior position on the Hell Squad, and a pumpkin-headed monster stalks the Beggar's Quarter.
Continuity	The PCs trace a series of murders to Chanarax, a mysterious entity who claims to be a death god incarnate.
Continuity	Undead creatures try to assassinate the Lord Mayor, aided by a Chanarax worshiper within the city council.
Focus: PC #1 (leader)	Xorox's loyalties are tested when his dead brother escapes from the land of the dead.
Ensemble	The slaying of a white witch, seeming to be the work of undead, turns out to be a vigilante killing by her misguided neighbors.
Focus: PC #3	Terele reluctantly leaves her children in the care of a new babysitter, who turns out to be the minion of a vengeful lich.
Focus: PC #4	Xorox, Stella, and Terele kill an apparent zombie who registers as having been alive; as they face a tribunal, Junavor must find out how they were framed.
Continuity	A political faction arises in the city, which argues for the rights of the dead to be treated as citizens. The Hell Squad investigates and finds that Chanarax is behind it, but the squad can do nothing to stop its growing power.
Ensemble	An abused teenager signs a demonic pact, then goes after the Hell Squad to test his newfound powers.
Focus: PC #5	Lovelorn Delmer receives messages from a secret admirer, leading the Hell Squad into a trap.
Change of Pace	Transported to an alternate dimension, the Hell Squad find themselves forced to mediate a dispute between a loquacious magician and an angst-ridden albino elf.
Focus: PC #1 (leader)	Xorox is tempted by an offer to take a safe and cushy job as a security consultant; meanwhile, the city's ectoplasmic pollution steadily worsens.
Focus: PC #2	Stella finds the favorite performers of her childhood, a husband and wife team, living quietly in the Beggar's Quarter, then discovers that the wife is hiding her husband's undead status.
Focus: PC #3	A bandit, now an undead creature sent back to hell by Terele, reaches out from the grave to hire a notorious assassin to stalk and kill her.
Focus: PC #4	Junavor poses as a student to infiltrate a ring of junior necromancers at the university.
Change of Pace	After a series of weird events, actors portraying the Hell Squad characters in a TV series begin to suspect that their roles are more real than they thought.
Ensemble	The Hell Squad protects a pregnant woman from the forces of the undead demonologist whose child she's about to bear.
Continuity	Chanarax floats a balloon over the city, drenching it in a red rain that turns the living into zombies.
Continuity	A climactic battle in Chanarax's lair ends with a cliffhanger. The Hell Squad ends up trapped in the Underworld, with all of their undead enemies converging on them.

find images of their chosen actor, which they can then add to their character sheets.

Plot Hooks

With character write-ups in hand, it's time for you to devise the basic storylines for your first season's worth of episodes. None of these need to be more than a few lines long; you can flesh out each adventure right before you run it.

There are three types of episodes: stand alone, continuity, and change-of-pace.

- **Stand-Alone Episode:** A stand-alone episode exemplifies the formula of the show and is self-contained. The viewer doesn't need to know anything about the series in order to understand it. Its conclusion ties up any hanging plot threads, and special guest characters probably won't be seen again.

Stand-alone episodes have two subtypes: character focus shows and ensemble shows. A character focus episode concentrates on one or two of the series's regulars. Use the character backgrounds submitted by your players to help you come up with appropriate ideas for character-focus, stand-alone episodes. An ensemble show is a linear adventure without subplots—your typical dungeon crawl, for instance.

- **Continuity Episode:** A Continuity episode introduces or advances a storyline that periodically pops up throughout the lifetime of the series. In this type of episode you might bring back a recurring villain or subtly change a regular character's basic situation. A new viewer might be confused by the latest continuity episode, but devoted fans of the series are anxious to see what happens in the grand story arc.
- **Change-of-Pace Episode:** Change-of-pace episodes start appearing after the show's formula is well established in viewers' minds. This type of episode plays around with the formula in surprising ways. For example, it might alter the tone by bringing a comic mood to an otherwise serious show or change the usual structure or setting. The "musical" episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is a change-of-pace episode, as are the episodes of *Star Trek: Voyager* that send their cast back in time.

Create a chart that shows the episodes you have slated for the "season," alternating between change-of-pace, stand alone, and continuity episodes as appropriate. Also, for your first season you need to create a debut episode, a slam-bang opener in which the premise and theme of your campaign take center stage, and each of the characters gets something interesting to do that demonstrates her essential nature. (See the Undead Hunters Campaign Episode Chart for an example.)

Episode Design

Each episode should begin with a teaser, a quick scene or two that establishes the central problem of the episode. If the problem is a mystery, the heroes receive their first few clues. If the episode is more action-oriented, they find out who the villain is and discover why they have to fight him. Usually the teaser scenes end with a small cliffhanger—the stakes are identified and the heroes learn what terrible thing will happen if they fail. Teasers often contain red herrings or misleading clues, allowing the writer to make surprise revelations later on in the episode.

The meat of the episode is comprised of four segments. The first three segments further develop the episode's primary storyline. Each segment ends in a cliffhanger preceding a commercial break; the idea is to keep the viewer glued to the set. The cliffhanger is often a revelation showing that the heroes face an even bigger challenge than they first thought. This could take the form of a surprise twist. For example, the heroes might discover that the real villain is someone they trusted.

The final segment builds to a climactic scene in which the heroes solve the central problem. If it's a continuity episode, enough plot threads are left dangling for the writers to pick up next time. There's still time for a further twist just before the big scene; often the heroes surprise us by revealing the true nature of their clever plan.

You might find this a useful structure to use when outlining some of the adventures in your TV-like campaign. The teaser is just like any D&D adventure introduction—it establishes a problem in need of a solution and gives the heroes motivation to do the solving. Follow the teaser with a point-form list of your first three segments, with a segment ender for each. Then complete your outline with a sentence or two describing the big finale.

For example, your outline for the first episode of "Undead Hunters" might read as follows:

- **Teaser:** On his way to Hell Squad headquarters, Xorox encounters a small zombie gang.
- **1st Segment:** Xorox reinstated, other PCs introduced, breadth of zombie problem revealed in briefing.
- **1st Break:** Their first call: Zombies have surrounded the Lord Mayor's office.
- **2nd Segment:** Disperse zombies at mayor's office and investigate reason for zombie plague. Find Zelluyan the necromancer, who tells the PCs that a gate

has opened and they need the Globe of Elwar to close it again.

- **2nd Break:** Learn of sage who should know where the globe is, but he's missing from his tower, with scenes of a struggle. Searching his place, they find the globe.
- **3rd segment:** Follow clues to underground complex. Fight more zombies. Find a makeshift prison containing sage.
- **3rd break:** Zelluyan attacks the PCs and takes the globe. Turns out he's the bad guy who opened the gate; he can use the globe to keep it open forever. He tricked the Hell Squad into finding it when he couldn't.
- **Big finale:** Battle Zelluyan's undead minions as he casts a spell to open the gate.

Depending on what kind of DM you are, you can flesh out the adventure in detailed fashion or leave it as a set of notes. You'll want to have the necessary game statistics for NPCs and monsters handy, plus maps of crucial scenes.

Remember that anything you write in an adventure, TV-style or otherwise, is subject to revision depending on what the players do. They might never hit all of your segment breaks, for instance, and you shouldn't try to force them to do so. Even if you don't get to use them, you have a set of strong ideas you can use as springboards for new encounters.

Running Your Series

When the time comes to actually run the adventures based on the hooks you've developed, remember that it's more important to have a fun, exciting campaign than to replicate the exact structure of a television show. You're looking for inspiration, not limitations.

Don't expect each adventure to last exactly one session; let the players control the pacing. Don't bother trying to make the breaks fall evenly throughout your session, as they do in a TV episode; that kind of precise pacing is way too hard to replicate. If they want to pursue a storyline arising from what you thought of as a throw-away reference, take their interest and run with it. Even if they stick to your cues, there's no particular reason why one idea can't take up two sessions if that's what seems natural at the time.

You might also find it tough to maintain a strict division between continuity and stand-alone episodes. On *The X-Files*, Mulder and Scully often seem to conveniently forget that there's a worldwide conspiracy out to get them and an imminent alien invasion in progress. Instead, they go off to investigate the mutant of the week as if there's nothing else for them to do. The audience is supposed to accept the fact that Mulder and Scully only react to the conspiracy when a new development smacks them in the face, rather than going out and taking long-term proactive steps against it. Your players probably won't be as cooperative against a recurring villain or conspiracy. You'll need to give the PCs a good reason to switch their attention from the overall story arc to the central crisis of a stand alone episode. During continuity episodes, you'll also have to adjust quickly to their activities. Once combat begins, the DM has very little control over its outcome. Any time the PCs fight a recurring villain, you run the risk that they'll kill him. That's why it's best to make your villain part of a larger group—if he bites the dust, another character can be introduced as the genuine threat.

By centering storylines around particular PCs, you're also running the risk of their dying in mid-season. Actors leave shows all the time, but usually with enough advance warning that their producers can write them out. Even when you manage to avoid snuffing any PCs, you always have to be ready for players to drop out of the group or for others to join it in midstream.

You can deal with this either by adjusting character-focused episodes as you go or leaving them generic or blank in your episode chart. Still, even though you know you'll have to ditch some of the character-focused episodes, it is probably still worthwhile to create ideas beforehand for these character-focused episodes. The exercise might give you a greater feel for the types of stories you want to present. Also, when characters die, you might find it easier than you think to adapt existing plot hooks to their replacements.

Stay Tuned . . .

There you have it: a framework for a D&D campaign—television style. You might not win any Emmys or get a *TV Guide* feature with collectible covers, but you enjoy an advantage TV producers would kill for: The network can't cancel your game.

COUNTRYCRAFT

Building a Better World through Dungeoncraft

by Ray Winninger • illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

World building is a "Dungeoncraft" specialty. The regular "Dungeoncraft" column features the step-by-step construction of a D&D campaign and provides advice on how to run it. Along the way, "Dungeoncraft" goes behind the scenes as much as possible to provide you with tips and rules you can use to create your own campaigns. For the past eighteen months or so, "Dungeoncraft" has been devoted to fleshing out The Lost World, a primitive campaign setting dominated by barbarian tribes and dinosaurs. So far, the column has developed a detailed "home base" for the PCs, customized the D&D character races to the setting, and sketched out the inhabitants' basic political and religious beliefs. Those of you who are newcomers should also know that across the last forty-odd months, "Dungeoncraft" has proposed a handful of guidelines for DMs known as the Rules of Dungeoncraft. While most of these rules seem simple on the surface, they often have subtle implications that can profoundly impact your thinking as you plan and run your games.

Newcomers are encouraged to go to http://www.wizards.com/dragon, where earlier "Dungeoncraft" columns are archived. There you can catch up on what you missed and find out how each of the six rules evolved and how they are applied.

This month starts with the Seventh Rule of Dungeoncraft, and at first blush, some of you are bound to find this one a little controversial.

The Seventh Rule of Dungeoncraft: Running a good D&D campaign is about building a world, not about building a story.

Many Dungeon Masters, particularly those who have spent a lot of time playing other roleplaying games, make the mistake of trying to devise a story instead of a world. These folks plan their plot twists, create NPCs with complex motivations, and channel the players toward dramatic, climactic

encounters. The more ambitious among them even borrow techniques from cinema and literature—like foreshadowing, cut-away scenes, and frame story narratives—to lend their adventures a sophisticated, literary air. In this way, they hope to create adventures and campaigns that are as memorable as the best fantasy novels and films. In short, their worlds are secondary to their stories; the story comes first, and the world is built to support it.

The biggest problem with this approach is that it almost always takes far too much responsibility away from the players. A good D&D campaign should allow the players to find and follow their own stories. After all, the biggest attraction of the D&D game is that it allows the players to create characters of their own and test the mettle of those characters against a series of interesting challenges. In a tightly plotted game, the players are often not allowed to do what they really want to do. Instead, they're forced to do what the DM needs them to do in order for the over-arching plot to resolve itself according to plan.

For instance, a DM decided that a player character should be captured and brainwashed into betraying the rest of the party. The capture and betrayal would lead the party to undertake a quest for a magical artifact capable of restoring their comrade's true personality. The DM also hoped that the betrayal would give the player of the captured PC some great opportunities for roleplaying since she had already decided that her character was betrayed by friends at an early age, and the irony of her betraying her own friends should naturally lead to all sorts of interesting soul searching.

While this story might be interesting, it was awkward to unfold within the confines of a D&D game. Right off the bat, the DM was forced to jump through several obvious and clumsy hoops to manipulate events in order to guarantee that the hapless PC was captured. The player even sensed what was happening and took a number of prudent steps to protect herself, none of which were allowed to have any effect lest the over-arching plot suffer. Later, once the PC met her fate and carried out the betrayal, the rest of the party began a lengthy debate about what to do with her. Again, the DM was forced to clumsily prod the party into accepting the quest that he had outlined, even though the PCs had identified several alternatives.

In this sort of campaign, it isn't too long before the players justifiably start to wonder whether or not any of their decisions are really having an impact on the game. Regardless of what they decide to do, the DM always finds some way to pull them back into the script he's already written. The worst games of this sort feel like the DM is simply reading the players a novel and occasionally asking them to roll the dice in order to get to the next chapter. (And even those dice rolls will be somehow dismissed if they don't further the DM's aims).

Of course, not every DM who adopts this style of play is as clumsy as the DM of the example. Some are so skilled that they can make the players believe that they are making all the decisions, even when they're really simply following a script. Even in these rare cases, though, the spirit of the D&D game begins to crumble. The essence of D&D is that it allows the players to be who they want to be and then pit that persona against a series of interesting challenges. Since the rules were designed to empower the players and leave them with plenty of options, even the best story-oriented DMs soon end up spending a lot of time figuring out how to work around the rules instead of using the rules as a helpful tool. After all, what makes for a fun game isn't necessarily the same thing that makes for a good story.

None of this is to say that great and memorable stories shouldn't arise from your D&D campaign. They can, and they will. The important difference is that you should allow the players to find their own stories. Your "plot twists" should always come as a reaction to whatever it is the players have freely decided to do. You should never reverse the process and force the players into an action in order to justify a "twist" you have already designed.

The Birth of Realm Rules

Anyone familiar with the BIRTHRIGHT campaign setting designed by Rich Baker and Colin McComb should recognize that the domain rules that first appeared there serve as the foundation for this article. Changes were made to take advantage of the new edition's skill system, but the original design remains the product of BIRTHRIGHT's designers.

Which finally leads us back to the Seventh Rule of Dungeoncraft. The easiest way to avoid the trap just described is to think about your D&D campaign as a world and not a story. Think of your creation as a sort of sophisticated ant farm in which the little imaginary residents go about their business each day regardless of whether or not the PCs ever meet them or try to interfere. Create your setting, create its inhabitants, and think about their hopes and desires. Then spice things up by introducing a few situations and deciding how your creations react.

THE FIRST RULE OF DUNGEONCRAFT
Never force yourself to create more than you must.

That last point is an important one. A good DM always creates situations, not plots. A situation is just a set-up—a simple event or occurrence. A plot, on the other hand, is a whole chain of events that occur as a reaction to a situation. "A meteor containing a rare magical metal crashes on the planet" is a good example of a situation. "An evil cult uses the magical metal from a crashed meteor to mind control one of the PCs into leading a revolt against a nearby kingdom," is a plot. Starting with a situation allows you to decide what happens next on a step-by-step basis while the game is unfolding—each situation provokes a reaction, creating a new situation, provoking a new reaction, and so on. Starting with a plot, on the other hand, forces you to manipulate events so that your chain of preplanned occurrences doesn't break.

Returning to the magical meteor example, once you decide to introduce the situation of the meteor crash, you'd then think about the various NPCs and

power groups that inhabit your world and figure out who might find out about the meteor, who might have an interest in it, and what those parties might decide to do. Only after you give those events a chance to play themselves out should you try to figure out what happens next. You might decide, for example, that one of the evil cults inhabiting your world is interested in acquiring the meteor to further its insidious aims. You then make a note to yourself that representatives of the cult are on their way to the crash site and wait to see how the events unfold before deciding what comes next. Maybe the PCs find out about the meteor and try to investigate, but maybe they don't. Maybe the PCs are the first to arrive at the crash site, but maybe they aren't. If the cultists get their hands on the metal and the PCs do show up, maybe the cultists try to use its powers to mind control one of the heroes. Maybe the mind control attempt succeeds and maybe it fails. If the players decide to ignore the meteor crash altogether, the cultists undoubtedly figure out another way they can use the magic metal to accomplish their goals. If the PCs get wind of this new scheme, maybe they'll try to do something about it, but maybe they won't. There are all sorts of good stories that might flow out of this basic situation.

Good DMs don't decide upon any one outcome until they see how the players react (and figure out how the appropriate NPCs and power blocs react) to the current situation. In this way, the events of the campaign tend to arise organically. Before long, it might even start to feel like the world is essentially running itself. The dungeon crawl is at the heart of most D&D adventures for a reason. The dungeon is an excellent vehicle for this sort of situational approach. At every turn, the players are confronted with a choice between a number of different doors, corridors, and passageways. Only after they make a decision does the DM decide and reveal what happens next.

Handling the Big Picture

One of the secrets of running a successful campaign is to create the illusion that your world is a living, breathing environment with a life of its own. Such campaigns rigorously follow their own internal logic. Everything that happens makes sense and stems from everything that happened before. It's especially important to make sure that the players don't get the feeling that the events that make up the campaign are only a result of the DM's whims. Unless the players can identify a consistent pattern and start to grasp some of the world's inner logic, they'll eventually start to doubt that their own actions are genuinely shaping the game in any way. Ultimately, they'll probably grow disinterested.

A good way to start breathing life into your game is to get prepared to regularly discuss the large-scale events that are happening across the whole of your campaign area. Is there plenty of food available? How is trade going? Are the townsfolk happy? What's the local government up to? While resolving these basic issues is a great way to get your game world in gear, it can be tedious and time-consuming to get them right. For that reason, "Dungeoncraft" presents a set of game rules you can use to quickly handle the large-scale affairs of entire kingdoms, freeing up more of your time to worry about drawing dungeons, crashing meteors, and creating other unusual situations to stir up the pot.

Those of you who remember the BIRTHRIGHT campaign setting for the 2nd edition of AD&D might recall a similar set of rules for handling large scale events. Since BIRTHRIGHT was designed to emphasize adventures on an epic scale, those rules were considerably more ambitious than these. If you're hoping to run a campaign in which large-scale events and international affairs take center stage, you can easily expand these rules to provide more detail and more options.

The Second Rule of Dungeoncraft

Whenever you fill in a major piece of the campaign world, always devise at least one secret related to that piece.

One benefit of using a consistent set of rules to help handle large-scale events is that your game world will already start to acquire an internal logic. It won't be long before the players begin to recognize a pattern and realize that you are well prepared to answer all their questions about what is happening in the world around them. As the PCs become more involved in the campaign's larger scale events, you might even explain how these rules work and allow the players to help you resolve the "Campaign Rounds" described below. Such an opportunity might encourage them to take actions that can affect the campaign's large events, giving them an even stronger sense of participation.

The Map and Realms

In order to use these rules, you'll first need a map of your campaign area. Although there's no limit to the size of the area the rules can handle, the larger the area in question, the greater the effort necessary to resolve all the appropriate events and activities. In most cases, these rules work best when used to handle an area roughly equivalent in size to a local wilderness map (roughly a circle covering some 22,500 square miles). When using these rules, it's a good idea to arm yourself with several photocopies of your map.

Once you have your map, you should decide what "realms" are present on that map. Generally, a realm is a kingdom, country, county, tribe, or any other government that is active in the campaign area. You should then mark the location of each realm's capitol on your map. The capitol is usually a city or stronghold, and it represents the location at which the realm's leaders meet to conduct their business.

After all the capitols are in place, you can sketch each realm's borders. Repeat the following process for each one of your realms.

Start by noting the location of each of the realm's "bases." A base is a city, town, or stronghold at which the realm maintains a military presence. The realm's capitol is automatically considered to be a base. You should also classify each base (including the capitol) as small or large.

Once the bases are in place, note the locations of the realm's "guarding

armies." A guarding army is a military unit that simply patrols territory and isn't housed at a base. Generally, guarding armies represent border patrols, field encampments, and constabularies. Note the location of each guarding army by writing a small "G" on the copy of the map.

Finally, draw a contiguous border around all the areas that are controlled by the realm. Obviously, all the realm's bases and guarding armies should be encircled within its borders. You can make each realm's border as big or as small as you like depending upon the needs of your campaign. Typically, realms that control a lot of territory are particularly wealthy and powerful.

Once you've defined the borders of each of your realms on the map copy, make sure that no two borders overlap.

The Realm Control Sheet

Once you've drawn the borders of each of your realms, you should fill out a copy of the realm control sheet for each of them. The realm control sheet is essentially a character sheet for an entire kingdom. It will help you keep track of basic information about the realm as it changes over time. Since you'll be changing a lot of the values recorded on the realm control sheets as you play, you might want to fill them out in pencil.

Start with "Population and Resources." Next to the terrain types listed in the "Population and Resources" section of the realm control sheet, fill in the number of 10-mile-by-10-mile squares of that particular terrain type that fall within the realm's border. Don't forget to fill in the number of bases inside the realm's borders on the bases line. Once you've filled in the "# of Squares" next to each terrain type, multiply each of those numbers by the listed population multiple and fill in the results in the population column. After the population column is completely full, add the values in the column to get your total population.

After you've finished calculating total population, repeat this same general procedure to determine the realm's total resources. Multiply the number of squares of each terrain type by the resource multiple for that terrain type, and add the results together to get the total resources.

Example: On the Lost World map, the evil-aligned Bruun realm's borders contain five plain 10-mile-by-10-mile squares, fourteen jungle squares, and no squares of any other terrain type. Additionally, two bases are located within the borders. The five plain squares are worth a population of 60, the fourteen jungle squares are worth a population of 42, and the two bases are worth a population of 8. Thus, the realm's total population is 110.

As for resources, the five plain squares generate a total of 5 resources, the fourteen jungle squares generate 28 resources, and the two bases don't generate any. The realm's total resources, then, is 33.

As the name implies, population is a rough measure of the number of tax-paying citizens who live within the realm's borders. Each point of population represents approximately one thousand citizens. In general, the larger the realm's population, the greater the tax revenues it collects and the easier it is for the realm to recruit soldiers. Resources, on the other hand, represent the availability of raw materials, such as stone and wood, within the realm's borders. Later you'll see that realms can use these resources to build structures and outfit armies.

Now that the Population and Resources section is complete, it's time to calculate the realm's military strength, discontent, and hardship.

Military strength is an abstract measure of the size of the realm's armies. Like population, each point of military strength represents approximately one thousand armed soldiers. A realm's beginning military strength is equal to its total population divided by 20 (round fractions up). Realms with a population of less than 20 automatically have a military strength of 1.

Discontent is a measure of how displeased the realm's citizens are with their government. The higher the discontent of the populace, the greater the likelihood of civil disturbances, disloyalty, and low productivity among the masses. Each realm begins with a discontent of 13.

Hardship measures the general well-being of the populace. A high hardship score indicates that the population is suffering from some combination of disease, poverty, and malnutrition. Each realm begins with a hardship of 13.

Example: With a population of 110, the Bruun realm has an initial military strength of 6, meaning the Bruun can muster an army six thousand strong. The Bruun's initial discontent and hardship are both 13.

Next, fill out the realm control sheet's "Treasury and Trade" section.

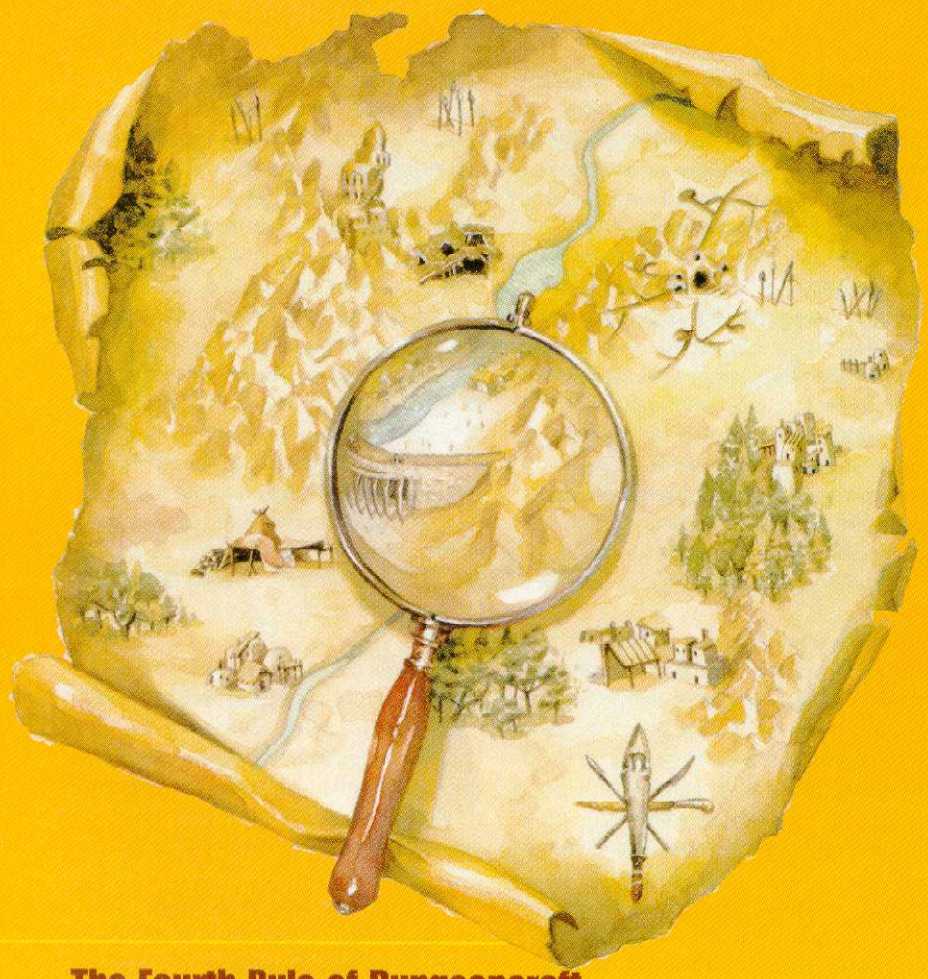
Current treasury represents the approximate value of treasure held in the coffers of the realm's government. Each realm begins with a treasury equal to its population times 10,000 in gold pieces.

Tax rate measures the amount of taxes the realm's citizens are expected to pay. Tax rate is classified as either high, medium, or low. Realms with a high tax rate collect a lot of money from their citizens, while realms with a low tax rate collect little. All realms begin with a medium tax rate. Circle medium, write in the realm's total population next to the medium multiplier of 5,000, and perform the multiplication to determine the realm's income.

For now, leave the section marked "Trade Realm" blank. Later, you'll use this section to record information about the trade routes the realm establishes.

Example: Because its population is 110, the Bruun realm has a starting treasury of 1,100,000 gp. The income of the Bruun realm is 110 times 5000 or 550,000 gp.

The Third Rule of Dungeoncraft
Whenever you must decide the chance of something happening and you have no idea what that chance should be, it's always 50%.



The Fourth Rule of Dungeoncraft

Good adventures always challenge the players and challenge their characters.

Once you've completely filled out the trade portion of the realm control sheet, it's time to fill out some basic details about the realm.

First, select an alignment for the realm. This is essentially the equivalent to the community alignments discussed on page 137 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The realm's alignment describes the basic tendency of the majority of its residents. It certainly shouldn't be interpreted as the alignment of every single resident of the realm—there are plenty of bad people who come from good places and vice versa. The realm alignment doesn't even necessarily reflect the alignment of the realm's ruler(s), although the two are often the same.

Next, select the Diplomacy skill modifier of the realm's ruler. If a council, senate, or some other collective rules the realm instead of a single leader, simply select one skill modifier for the entire ruling council as a whole. Mediocre leaders have a Diplomacy skill modifier of +5, outstanding leaders have a modifier of +10 (or even higher), and truly terrible leaders have a modifier of +3 or lower; select any value you feel appropriate. Should a PC ever come to lead a realm, use his Diplomacy skill modifier for the realm, and allow him to make all decisions for the realm as you resolve the campaign turns described below. Note that these rules slightly expand upon the basic Diplomacy skill described in the *Player's Handbook* to represent a character's ability to handle all affairs of state, not just negotiations and protocol.

After you've selected an appropriate Diplomacy skill modifier, select a Wisdom score for the realm's ruler and record the ruler's Wisdom bonus in the appropriate blank on the realm control sheet. An average ruler might have a Wisdom of 13, an exceptional ruler might have a Wisdom of 17, and a poor ruler might have a Wisdom of 9.

Select a Wilderness Lore skill modifier for the realm, representing the general ability of the realm's residents to find game and forage for food. Most cultures have a Wilderness Lore modifier of +5, but cultures that thrive in the Wilderness have a modifier of +10, and cultures composed mostly of city dwellers have a modifier of +3 or lower. Again, select any value you feel appropriate.

Once you've selected a Wilderness Lore modifier, determine the realm's Knowledge (nature) skill modifier. In this context, Knowledge (nature) represents the ability of the realm's residents to

Encounter Modifiers

Squares	Modifier
0	-5%
1	+2%
2	+4%
3	+6%
4	+8%
5+	+10%

Ill-Will

First Realm's Alignment	Second Realm's Alignment								
	CE	LE	NE	CN	LN	N	CG	LG	NG
CE	22	23	25	22	21	22	21	20	21
LE	23	20	21	20	19	20	20	19	20
NE	25	21	23	22	21	22	21	20	21
CN	22	20	22	15	14	15	14	13	14
LN	21	19	21	14	13	14	13	12	13
N	22	20	22	15	14	15	14	13	14
CG	21	20	21	14	13	14	12	11	12
LG	20	19	20	13	12	13	11	10	11
NG	21	20	21	14	13	14	12	11	12

farm. Most cultures have a Knowledge (nature) modifier of +5, though cultures particularly skilled in agriculture might have up to a +10, while cultures that do little farming might have a modifier of +3 or below.

Finally, calculate the realm's encounter modifier. This is the value added to the chance of a wilderness encounter occurring while traveling through the realm (see page 132 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), and it's a basic measure of how successful the realm is at keeping dangerous monsters and undesirables out of its territory. In other words, if a realm has an encounter modifier of +10%, the chance of a wilderness encounter while passing through a wasteland area within that realm's borders is 15% per hour, while the chance of an encounter while passing through a heavily traveled area is 22% per hour. To calculate a realm's encounter modifier, divide the total number of 10-mile-by-10-mile squares within the realm's borders by its military strength (rounding fractions down) and consult the Encounter Modifiers table.

Example: An alignment of neutral evil fits the Bruun Realm well. The rulers of the Bruun are notoriously inept and stubborn, so a Diplomacy skill modifier of +4 and a Wisdom score of 10 are good choices. Since the Bruun are outdoorsmen at heart and clumsy farmers, a Wilderness Lore skill modifier of +9 and a Knowledge (nature) modifier of +3 are appropriate.

To calculate the encounter modifier within the Bruun realm's borders, divide the size of the realm in squares (19) by its military strength (6) for a result of 3 (fractions are dropped). Thus, the encounter modifier is +6%.

Finally, you can fill out the realm control sheet's "Realm Diplomacy" section. Here you'll keep track of the basic diplomatic relations between this particular realm and all the other realms in the campaign area.

First, fill in the names and alignments of all the other realms in the area in the blanks indicated. Then, calculate the basic ill-will between this realm and each of the others. Ill-will is a measure of how much the leaders of the two realms distrust or dislike each other. From time-to-time, a realm will be called upon to make a Diplomacy skill check to influence a rival, using the ill-will between the two realms as the DC. Determine the initial ill-will values between the various realms in the campaign area by comparing their alignments on the Ill-Will table.

Example: The other realms in the Lost World campaign area and their alignments are listed below.

Jazra: lawful neutral
Inuundi: chaotic good
Lizardfolk: lawful evil
Janda: lawful good
Solaani: neutral good
Bruun (good): neutral good
Vistiiri: chaotic neutral

Since this particular Bruun realm is neutral evil, the ill-will between the evil Bruun and each of the other realms is as follows:

Jazra: 21
Inuundi: 21
Lizardfolk: 21
Janda: 20
Solaani: 21
Bruun (good): 21
Vistiiri: 22

The Campaign Turn

Once all your realm control sheets are filled out, you're ready to go. As your campaign unfolds, resolve the affairs of your realms by executing campaign turns. Think of a campaign turn like a combat round, only instead of lasting six seconds, it lasts for three months.

Each campaign turn maps to a specific season. In other words, the first campaign turn is Spring, followed by Summer, Fall, and Winter. Like combat rounds, campaign turns are conducted in a series of phases.

Ideally, you should use this system not only as a means of figuring out what is going on in your world, but as a tool for generating ideas for adventures and encounters. If a campaign turn reveals that relations between two realms have become strained, you might want to run an adventure (or at least create some background) to explain why. Similarly, if one realm declares war on another during a campaign turn, soldiers from the various factions might be commonly encountered in the area of the fighting for the next few months. Virtually everything that happens during a campaign turn might affect the adventures you run in a similar fashion.

1. The Random Event Phase

Start each campaign turn with the random event phase. Roll once on the Random Events table and follow the directions in the resulting entry.

Random Events Table (d20)

1	Plague
2-3	Large Predator
4-5	Natural Disaster
6-7	Bandits
8-13	Political Strife
14	Birth
15	Resources Found
16	Controversy
17	Foodstores Damaged
18	Fire
19	Campaign Specific
20	None

Plague: A plague strikes the selected realm. Temporarily increase the realm's hardship by +4 until the next time the realm passes a Wilderness Lore or Knowledge (nature) check during the hardship subphase of its campaign turn—then the +4 penalty is removed. In addition, any PC (or important NPC) in the realm has a chance of contracting the plague. All appropriate characters

Campaign Turn Phases

1. Random Event Phase
2. Initiative Phase
3. Realm Turns
   a. Hardship Subphase
   b. Treasury Subphase
   c. Discontent Subphase
   d. Action Subphase
   e. Adjustment Subphase

make Fortitude saving throws (DC 15). Treat anyone who fails as though he has just succumbed a disease with a DC of 15, an incubation of 1d3 days, and damage of 1d6 Strength (see page 74 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Large Predator: A large monster or band of monsters wanders into the realm's territory—the exact details are up to the DM. Increase the realm's discontent by +3 for this campaign turn only. Hunting down this new predator might be an interesting adventure for the PCs to undertake. Should they succeed, the realm does not suffer the +3 discontent increase for the turn.

Natural Disaster: Some sort of natural disaster—a flood, storm, volcanic eruption, and so on—strikes the realm. Income from trade is halved this turn.

Bandits: Bandits, brigands, or pirates plague the selected realm. Reduce the realm's income by 25% (after all other modifications) for 1d3 campaign turns. Again, this event might form the basis of an interesting adventure for the PCs. If the PCs are able to destroy the bandits' base of operations in an adventure, the realm's income is immediately restored to normal.

Political Strife: An "international incident" occurs between the selected realm and another nearby realm. Randomly select a second realm. The first realm must make a Diplomacy skill check against a DC equal to its ill-will with the second realm. If the check fails, increase the ill-will between the two realms by +2.

Birth: A son or daughter is born to one of the realm's important political leaders. This event doesn't really affect anything that happens during the campaign turn. It merely provides the DM with fodder for campaign news.

Resources Found: The realm's forces successfully locate a new source of resources (a new mine, a new forest, and so on). Add +5 to the realm's resource total for this campaign turn.

Controversy: Some form of political controversy arises in the realm that arouses distrust in the public. The DM is encouraged to invent the appropriate details. Add +4 to the realm's discontent for this campaign turn only. This is yet another event that might lead to an adventure. If the PCs somehow resolve the controversy during the course of the adventure, the realm doesn't suffer the increase.

Foodstores Damaged: A fire or disaster of some other sort damages the realm's grain silos and foodstores. Add +3 to the realm's hardship until a new foodstore is rebuilt (see the Action Subphase).

Fire: A fire destroys 1-4 important buildings somewhere in the realm. Increase discontent by +2 until they are all rebuilt (see the Action Subphase).

Campaign Specific: The DM should fill in an event specific to his own campaign in this slot. In the Lost World, a random events roll of 20 indicates that the realm has been unusually successful in rounding up wild dinosaurs to serve as mounts and beasts of burden. The realm nets 5,000 gp for its Treasury.

2. Initiative Phase

During this phase, check initiative for all realms in the area to determine the order in which they get to take their turns. Each realm's initiative score is equal to a d20 roll plus its leader's Wisdom modifier. The realms take their turns in initiative order unless a realm chooses to delay or ready an action.

3. Realm Turns Phase

Now, each realm conducts its turn in initiative order. Each realm's turn consists of several subphases.

3a. Hardship Subphase

Determine the realm's effectiveness in gathering food and the general health of its citizens. Exactly how you conduct the hardship subphase generally depends upon whether it is currently a Winter/Spring campaign turn or a Summer/Fall campaign turn.

During Winter/Spring turns, the realm makes a Wilderness Lore skill check using its Hardship as the DC. Each 35,000 gp the realm spends from its treasury gives it a +1 bonus to this check.

If the check succeeds, all is well for the turn and the realm suffers no penalties. If the realm's hardship is currently greater than 13, it is reduced by one.

If the check fails, however, the realm's discontent is increased by +3 for this campaign turn only and the realm is not allowed to recruit new military forces (see Actions, below) during the turn. The realm's hardship is also increased by +1.

During Summer/Fall turns, the realm makes a Knowledge (nature) skill check using its hardship minus 5 as the DC. Each 35,000 gp the realm spends from its treasury gives it a +1 bonus to this check. The results of this check are the same as the results of the Wilderness Lore check described above.

Non-Agricultural Realms: Realms can choose to use their Wilderness Lore skill in place of Knowledge (nature) even during Summer/Fall turns. This option makes sense for realms with little or no agricultural skill and good Wilderness Lore scores.

3b. Treasury Subphase

The realm collects revenues and adds them to its treasury.

Taxes: First, the realm sets its tax rate as low, medium, or high for the turn. The higher the tax rate, the more money the realm will collect, but the more discontent it will cause among the population.

For a low tax rate, multiply the realm's population by 2,000 to determine its tax income. For a medium tax rate, multiply population by 5,000, and

Discontent Modifiers

Population	Modifier
<= 25	0
26-50	-1
51-100	-2
101-200	-3
201-500	-4
501+	-5

Tax Rate	Modifier
Low	+2
Medium	0
High	-5

The Sixth Rule of Dungeoncraft

Simple, easily identifiable characteristics are the best tools for portraying NPCs.

multiply by 10,000 for a high tax rate. If the realm has changed its tax rate since the last turn, make sure you update its realm control sheet.

Trade: Now, the realm collects income for each of the trade routes it's opened with its neighbors. All of the realm's trade routes should be recorded on its realm control sheet. To determine the amount of revenue derived from a trade route, subtract the ill-will between the two trading realms from 22. If the result is positive, multiply it by 3,000 gp. If the result is negative, the trade route yields no revenue. If there is a road between the two realms, double the final result.

For example, suppose the ill-will between two realms is 15. A trade route between these two realms yields 45,000 gp. If a road connects the capitols of the two realms, the route yields 90,000 gp (45,000 doubled).

Pay Maintenance: Finally, the realm must pay maintenance costs (representing salaries, cost of weapons, and so on) on its standing armies. Subtract from the realm's treasury an amount equal to its military strength times 25,000 gp. At this point, the realm can voluntarily decrease its military strength in order to lower maintenance costs. If the realm doesn't have enough money in its treasury to cover the costs, it must reduce military strength.

3c. Discontent Subphase

Next, determine the general happiness of the realm's populace. The realm's ruler makes a Diplomacy skill check against a DC equal to the realm's current discontent. This check can be modified by random events (see descriptions above) and the results of the hardship subphase previously detailed. It is also modified by the realm's population and current tax rates, according to the Discontent Modifiers table.

The realm can also apply any portion of its military strength to the check as a modifier, representing the use of troops to quell unrest and uprisings. Any military strength used here cannot be used to make war later in the turn (see Making War, below).

If the Diplomacy check succeeds and the current discontent is greater than 13, the discontent decreases by -1.

If the Diplomacy check fails, increase the discontent of the realm by +2. If a realm fails this Diplomacy check three turns in a row, a rebellion arises and successfully overthrows the government. Determine new skill values and a new alignment for the realm (recalculate all the ill-will between the realm and its neighbors based on this new alignment) and cancel all existing trade routes to and from the realm. You should make a note on the realm control sheet next to the realm's discontent score every time one of these Diplomacy checks fails to help you recognize that three checks have failed in a row. Erase any existing marks when a Diplomacy check succeeds.

The DM should look to the results of a realm's most recent discontent subphase for important background information when running adventures set in that realm. A high discontent score means the populace generally distrusts its government, and a failed Diplomacy check indicates that various riots, strikes, and demonstrations are starting to take place. If the realm chose to use some of its military strength as a modifier to the Diplomacy check, the realm is in a state of quasi-martial law with soldiers actively patrolling most populated areas.

The Seventh Rule of Dungeoncraft

Running a good campaign is about building a world, not building a story.

3d. Action Subphase

With all the administrative subphases out of the way, it's time for the realm to take action. During each action subphase, a realm can perform up to two of the actions listed below. (Alternatively, the realm can perform any single action twice).

Open Trade: The realm attempts to establish a trade route with a nearby realm. An attempt to establish a trade route requires an expenditure of 50,000 gp. After paying this fee, the realm makes a Diplomacy skill check against the current ill-will between itself and the target realm. If the check succeeds, the route is open.

Note that opening a trade route with a realm does not automatically give that realm a trade route with you. In other words, if the Vistiiri open a trade route with the Bruun, the Vistiiri make money from that route each turn but the Bruun do not. To make money themselves, the Bruun must successfully open a trade route with the Vistiiri. Attempting to open a trade route with a realm that has already opened a route with you entitles you to a +3 bonus on your Diplomacy check.

Build Roads: This action allows the realm to build a road. The road costs 6,000 gp and 2 resources for each 10-mile-by-10-mile square the road spans. A road that connects the capitols of two realms doubles the value of any trade routes between those realms (see Treasury Subphase, above). Each realm can build no more than 8 squares of road in a single action (performing the build roads action twice allows a realm to build up to 16 squares of road per turn).

Build Structure: The realm can use this action to build a major structure somewhere within its borders. Building a structure requires an expenditure of money and resources based upon the type of structure being constructed. Few of these structures have any direct impact on the rules (other than canceling out the effects of certain random events), but a new structure can have a significant impact on adventures set in that realm.

Structure	Cost	Resources
Palace	200,000 gp	20
Library	220,000 gp	14
Temple	100,000 gp	10
Foodstores	60,000 gp	8
Marketplace	60,000 gp	8
Warehouse	40,000 gp	6
Barracks	50,000 gp	8
Shipyard	180,000 gp	14
Monument	100,000 gp +	10+

Recruit: The realm can recruit new soldiers for its military. To do so, the realm pays its current military strength times 10,000 gp and expends 10 resources. After these expenditures are made, add +1 to the realm's military strength. Note that a realm can never have a military strength that is greater than its population divided by 10 (round fractions up).

Make War: This action allows the realm to attack neighboring squares. Launching a military attack costs a realm 100,000 gp times its military strength and consumes the realm's military strength in resources.

Note that the realm can voluntarily attack with a lower military strength in order to decrease the costs of the attack. If the realm used some of its military strength to affect its Diplomacy roll during the discontent subphase earlier in the turn, it must lower the size of its attacking force by at least that amount. Any such reductions do not permanently lower the realm's military strength; they only reduce the effectiveness of the attack. A realm that wishes to make war must attack with at least a strength of 1.

Example: A realm with a military strength of 8 that used 2 points of its military strength during the discontent subphase can attack with a strength of 6 at a cost of 120,000 gp and 6 resources. If it chose, it could attack with even lesser strength—say 3, at a cost of 60,000 gp and 3 resources.

To resolve an attack, see Making War below.

Build Guarding Army: The realm builds a stronghold and deploys part of its armed forces as a guarding army. The realm pays 100,000 gp, expends 10 resources, and lowers its military strength by -1. It can now place a guarding army (see The Map and Realms above) in any square in its territory. There is no benefit from placing a second guarding army in a square that already contains one.

Conduct Diplomacy: This action can be used to improve the relations between a realm and its neighbors. To conduct diplomacy, the realm picks a target, expends 50,000 gp, and makes a Diplomacy skill check against its current ill-will with that target. If the check succeeds, subtract 2 from the ill-will between the realm and the target.

Hold Games or Festivals: A realm can hold public games or a religious festival to bolster the morale of its citizens. Holding games or festivals costs money but yields the realm a bonus to its discontent subphase Diplomacy check next turn. Games and festivals come in three types: simple, impressive, and elaborate.

Type	Cost	Bonus
Simple	500 gp x population	+1
Impressive	1500 gp x population	+2
Elaborate	3500 gp x population	+5

Thus, it costs a realm with a population of 50 175,000 gp to hold elaborate games, but the realm receives a +5 bonus to the Diplomacy check during its next discontent subphase.

Buy/Sell Resources: A realm with spare resources during its turn can use an action to convert those resources into gold pieces that it can add to its treasury. Each unused resource point nets 5,000 gp.

Conversely, a realm that hopes to perform an action that requires more resources than it has can use its second action for the turn to temporarily purchase additional resources. Each additional point of resources costs 5,000 gp. Note that purchased resources are good for the turn of purchase only. They do not actually increase the realm's resource rating.

Build Base: The realm can establish a new base within its borders at a cost of 300,000 gp and 20 resources. Place the base in any square that doesn't already feature a base.

Move Capitol: Spending 200,000 gp and 20 resources allows the realm to move its current capitol to another base within its borders. The new base becomes the capitol, and the old capitol becomes an ordinary base.

Resources

Several of the actions a realm can take during its turn require the expenditure of resources. A realm cannot take a combination of actions that require total resources that are higher than its resources rating. Thus a realm with a resource rating of 12 cannot build a warehouse (requiring 6 resources) and recruit new soldiers (requiring 10 resources) during the same turn.

Note that resources cannot be saved up from turn to turn. Any resources not expended in a turn are gone.

Making War

The make war action allows a realm to attack neighboring 10-mile-by-10-mile squares in the hope of expanding the size of its territory. To resolve an attack, the realm rolls a d20 and adds the strength it is attacking with (see the description of the make war action above). The result is the number of "capture points" the realm earns. These points are then used to capture squares that are adjacent to territory already controlled by the realm.

Capture Table

Terrain Square	Capture Point Cost
Plains/Desert	5
Forest/Jungle	7
Hill/Swamp	9
Mountain	12

Capture Point Cost Modifiers

Square to be invaded . . .	
Contains river	+2
Contains base	+2
Contains Guarding Army	+7
Belongs to strong neighbor*	+5

*A square that is contained within the borders of another realm with a military strength greater than that of the attacker.

Example: Let's suppose a realm is attacking with a military strength of 7. The realm rolls a 20 for a total of 27 capture points. The realm can then spend these capture points in exchange for squares along its borders. It might, for example, pick up a contiguous chunk of four plains squares and a forest square (total cost of 27 capture points). Or, it might capture an enemy plains square containing a river and a base (cost of 9 capture points) plus a plains square containing an enemy guarding army (cost of 12 capture points) plus an ordinary plains square (5 capture points) for a total cost of 26 capture points.

Each square purchased with capture points must be adjacent to the realm's borders or adjacent to another square already purchased. Realms can capture squares that are not controlled by any other realm or squares that fall within the borders of another realm. Capturing a square that belonged to another realm automatically results in a state of war between the two realms that increases the ill-will between them to no less than 25 (if the current ill-will is greater than 2 it remains the same, otherwise ill-will increases to 25).

A realm that manages to capture the capitol of another realm conquers that

realm and automatically picks up all of its territory and half its treasury (effectively removing the conquered realm from play). Alternatively, the conqueror can install a friendly government of its choice in the realm. In this case, the conquered realm remains in play and gets a new government (just as though its government was overthrown during the discontent subphase). The conqueror chooses the alignment of the new government.

Note that realms with a good alignment cannot conquer territory belonging to other realms unless the DM decides such a move is adequately justified. A good-aligned realm that conquers territory owned by others without such a justification undergoes an alignment change at the DM's discretion.

Plunder: Whenever one Realm captures a base that belonged to another realm, the loser must forfeit 250,000 gp from his treasury, half of which goes to the conqueror. If the loser doesn't have the full 250,000, he loses what he can and the conqueror receives any loses in excess of 125,000.

3e. Adjustment Subphase

During this subphase, adjust the appropriate realm control sheets to reflect newly acquired (or newly lost) squares and the resulting gain in population, resources, tax income, encounter modifiers, and so on.

Realm Control Sheet

DRAGON©

GENERAL INFORMATION

Realm Name: _____
Realm Alignment: _____
Wilderness Lore: _____
Knowledge (nature): _____

Ruler Name: _____
Wisdom Score: _____
Diplomacy: _____

Military Strength: _____
Current Discontent: _____
Current Hardship: _____
Encounter Modifier: _____

TREASURY AND TRADE

Current Treasury: _____

Tax Rate	Multiple	Population	Income
Low	x2,000		
Medium	x5,000		
High	x10,000		

Trade Realm	Road? (x2)	Income

REALM DIPLOMACY

Realm	Alignment	Ill-Will

POPULATION & RESOURCES

Terrain	# of Squares	Population Multiplier	Population	Resources Multiplier	Resources
Plain		x12		x1	
Forest		x7		x5	
Hill		x6		x3	
Mountain		x3		x2	
Swamp		x1		x0	
Jungle		x3		x2	
Desert		x1		x0	
Bases		x4			
Totals		Total		Total	

by Rich Redman, with R&D staff • illustrated by Stan Shaw

MONSTERS with class

The *Monster Manual* isn't just for DMs

MONSTER CHARACTERS

So you want to play a monster? The first things you need to understand are Effective Character Levels (ECLs).

What are ECLs?

Effective Character Levels help you determine how many class levels a monster character can have and still fit in with your party of adventurers. A werewolf character can overshadow a party even if its CR plus class levels is equal to the average class level of the party. On the other hand, a half-celestial character with the exact same measurement might not be able to hit anything the party faces. ECLs help even things out.

Why Not Use CR?

The factors that go into making a good challenge and a good PC are very different. A monster is only "on the scene" for a very short while—usually just a few rounds. It shouldn't make much difference to a monster's CR if it has a spell-like ability usable at will or usable once per day. However, the distinction makes a huge difference when that creature is a PC and "on the scene" in every encounter. Further, if a powerful creature has access to a plethora of spell-like

abilities (like a balor), that really doesn't affect its CR too heavily, because it will only use three or four of them in a given encounter. But that kind of flexibility matters a lot to a PC. When we determined these ECLs, we took those factors into account.

How to Use ECLs

When building a monster character, the character's level is equal to class levels plus ECLs. Use that total to determine starting equipment (see Table 2-24: Starting Equipment for PCs above 1st Level, or Table 2-44: NPC Gear Value, both found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) and to determine the experience points needed to reach the next class level. Skill points, feats, and ability increases are based only on class levels.

Picking a Monster

First off, remember Rule 0: Your DM has the final say. Beyond that, follow these guidelines:

Choose creatures with Intelligence scores greater than 3. Creatures can not have levels in any class unless they have Intelligence scores above 1.

Consider carefully before choosing creatures with other ability scores less than 4.

Choose creatures with movement speeds.

Choose creatures that can communicate with fellow party members.

Consider carefully before choosing a kind of creature that usually or always has an alignment opposed to a party member's alignment.

Notes for the Table

The table below shows ECLs for many monsters from the *Monster Manual*. Some notes follow some entries.

The Sahuagin's ECL is 5, unless it has four arms, in which case the ECL is 6.

Yuan-ti halfbloods have an ECL of 14, regardless of their features.

Don't play a dryad character, since such characters can't move far from their trees.

An ECL of 20 or above is a good indication that the monster is simply too powerful to make a good player character.

An animal is not an appropriate PC unless it is awakened.

An awakened octopus still can't use more than 2 weapons.

Many creatures have a third entry marked Int. That's because a low Intelligence can be a problem for a PC. That note does not appear for animals because the ECL assumes they've been awakened.

Assassin vines and various fungi don't make good PCs not only because of their low Intelligence, but also because they can't move.

Monster ECLs

We'd like your feedback on the material in this article. The ECLs that appear in this article might appear in an upcoming D&D product. Although we're always looking for feedback on the articles we publish, this article gives you a ready-made opportunity to participate in the development of the D&D game with our R&D department. Any comments, good or bad, should be sent to **scalemail@wizards.com**.

Humanoids

Bugbear	4
Dwarf	0
Elf	0
Aquatic	1
Dark	2
Gray	0
Wild	0
Wood	0
Gnoll	3
Gnome	0
Goblin	0
Hobgoblin	1
Kobold	0
Lizardfolk	4
Locathah	3
Merfolk	1
Orc	0
Sahuagin	5
(6 with 4 arms)	
Troglodyte	5

Monstrous Humanoids

Centaur	7
Grimlock	5
Hag	
Sea hag	8
Annis	12
Green hag	14
Harpy	10
Kuo-toa	7
Medusa	10
Minotaur	10
Yuan-ti	
Pureblood	12
Halfblood	14
(regardless of features)	
Abomination	16

Giants

Ettin	15
Giant	
Hill	16
Stone	18
(Elder)	20
Frost	18
Fire	19
Cloud	23
Storm	26
Ogre	8
Merrow	9
Ogre mage	12
Troll	11
Scrag	11

Fey

Dryad	4
(treebinding makes dryads inappropriate for PCs)	
Grig	6
Nixie	3
Nymph	12
Pixie	5
With dance	7
Satyr	7

Animal

Ape	9
Baboon	4
Badger	3
Bat	2
Bear, black	6
Bear, brown	10
Bear, polar	12
Bison	8
Boar	7
Camel	5
Cat	0
Cheetah	7
Crocodile	7
Crocodile, giant	10
Dog	3
Dog, riding	4
Donkey	2
Eagle	3
Elephant	13
Hawk	3
Horse, heavy	4
Horse, heavy war	6
Horse, light	4
Horse, light war	5
Leopard	7
Lion	8
Lizard	0
Lizard, giant	4
Monkey	0
Mule	4
Octopus	5
(weapons limited to 2)	
Octopus, giant	12
Owl	3
Pony	3
Pony, war	3
Porpoise	5
Rat	0
Raven	2
Rhinoceros	12
Shark, medium-size	5
Shark, large	10
Shark, huge	13
Snake, constrictor	7
Snake, giant constrictor	14
Snake, tiny viper	3
Snake, small viper	4
Snake, medium-size viper	5
Snake, large viper	6
Snake, huge viper	8
Squid	5
Squid, giant	15
Tiger	10
Toad	0
Weasel	1
Whale, baleen	13
Whale, cachalot	14
Whale, orca	13
Wolf	3
Wolverine	5

Dire Animals

Dire rat	2
Dire weasel	5
Dire badger	5
Dire bat	9
Dire ape	10
Dire wolverine	8
Dire wolf	8
Dire boar	11
Dire lion	10
Dire bear	15
Dire tiger	20
Dire shark	22

Beasts

Ankheg (Int 1)	8
Bulette (Int 2)	14
Dinosaur	
Deionychus (Int 2)	8
Elasmosaurus (Int 2)	8
Megaraptor (Int 2)	12
Triceratops (Int 2)	18
Tyrannosaurus (Int 2)	22
Girallon (Int 2)	11
Gray render (Int 3)	16
Griffon (Int 5)	10
Hippogriff (Int 4)	5

Magical Beasts

Basilisk (Int 2)	10
Blink dog	8
Chimera	15
Cockatrice (Int 2)	10
Darkmantle (Int 2)	6
Digester (Int 2)	10
Displacer Beast	11
Dragonne	11
Ethereal marauder	6
Frost worm	17
Gargoyle	9
Giant eagle	8
Giant owl	8
Gorgon	12
Kraken	28
Krenshar	5
Lamia	12
Lammasu	12
Manticore	10
Pegasus	8
Phase spider	10
Remorhaz	13
Roper	18
Shocker lizard (Int 2)	4
Sphinx	
Androsphinx	19
Criosphinx	15
Gynosphinx	17
Hierocosphinx	14
Spider eater (Int 2)	9
Tarrasque	80
Unicorn	9
Winter wolf	9
Worg	6
Yrthak	18

Shapechanger

Aranea	8
Doppelganger	8
Phasm	22

Plant

Assassin vine (no move)	
Fungus (no move)	
Violet fungus	7
Phantom fungus	8
Shambling mound	14

Tendriculous	16
Treant	13

Construct

Animated object (no Int)	
Tiny	5
Small	6
Medium-size	8
Large	10
Huge	14
Gargantuan	21
Colossal	36
Golem (no Int)	
Flesh	15
Clay	19
Stone	22
Iron	26
Homunculus	8
Retriever (demon)	20
Shield guardian (no Int)	23

Aberrations

Aboleth	17
Athach	20
Beholder	24
Carrion crawler (Int 1)	7
Choker	8
Chuul	18
Cloaker	14
Delver	22
Destrachan	14
Drider	11
Ethereal filcher	10
Ettercap	9
Gibbering mouther	9
Grick	7
Mimic	12
Mind flayer	18
Naga	
Water	13
Spirit	16
Dark	16
Guardian	19
Otyugh	9
Rust monster	9
Skum	6
Umber hulk	15
Will-o'-wisp	19

Undead

Allip	13
Bodak	15
Devourer	22
Ghast	8
Ghoul	6
Mohrg	19
Mummy	11
Nightshade	
Nightwing	26
Nightwalker	30
Nightcrawler	34
Shadow	13
Skeleton (no Int)	
Medium-size	5
Spectre	17
Vampire spawn	12
Wight	9
Wraith	15
Zombie (no Int)	
Medium-size	5

Elemental

Belker	12
Elemental	
Air, small	7
Air, medium	9
Air, large	14
Air, huge	21
Air, greater	25
Air, elder	28
Earth, small	7
Earth, medium	9
Earth, large	14
Earth, huge	21
Earth, greater	25
Earth, elder	28
Fire, small	6
Fire, medium	8
Fire, large	13
Fire, huge	20
Fire, greater	25
Fire, elder	28
Water, small	6
Water, medium	8
Water, large	13
Water, huge	20
Water, greater	25
Water, elder	28
Invisible stalker	15
Magmin	6
Thoqqua	7

Outsider

Achaierai	12
Arrowhawk	
Juvenile	8
Adult	11
Elder	18
Aasimar	1
Azer	6
Barghest	
Barghest	25
Greater Barghest	30
Celestials	
Lantern archon	5
Hound archon	12
Avoral (guardinal)	14
Ghaele (eladrin)	20
Trumpet archon	20
Astral deva	20
Planetar	28
Solar	36
Chaos beast	14
Couatl	18
Demon	
Dretch	5
Quasit	7
Succubus	13
Bebilith	20
Retriever	20
Vrock	18
Hezrou	22
Glabrezu	23
Nalfeshnee	24
Marilith	24
Balor	28
Devil	
Lemure	4
Imp	7
Osyluth	11
Kyton	14
Hellcat	13
Barbazu	14
Erinyes	14
Hamatula	18
Cornugon	22
Gelugon	24
Pit Fiend	26
Djinni	13
Noble	18
Efreeti	19
Formian	
Worker	6
Warrior	10
Taskmaster	12
Myrmarch	18
Queen	30
(immobile, unplayable)	
Hell hound	6
Howler	10
Janni	11
Lillend	14
Mephit	
Air	6
Dust	6
Earth	6
Fire	6
Ice	6
Magma	6
Ooze	6
Salt	6
Steam	6
Water	6
Night hag	16
Nightmare	10
Ravid	9
Rakshasa	14
Rast	
Salamander	
Flamebrother	7
Average salamander	12
Noble	20
Shadow mastiff	9
Tiefling	1
Titan	30
Tojanida	
Juvenile	7
Adult	11
Elder	18
Triton	5
Vargouille	4
Xill	12
Xorn	
Minor	9
Average	12
Elder	20
Yeth hound	8

Dragon

Wyrmling	8
Very young	11
Young	14
Juvenile	17
Young adult	20
Adult	23
Mature adult	26
Old	29
Very old	32
Ancient	35
Wyrm	38
Great wyrm	41
White	+0
Black	+1
Green	+2
Blue	+3
Red	+4
Brass	+1
Copper	+2
Bronze	+3
Silver	+4
Gold	+5

Vermin

Giant Ant	
Worker	4
Soldier	5
Queen	7
Giant Bee	7

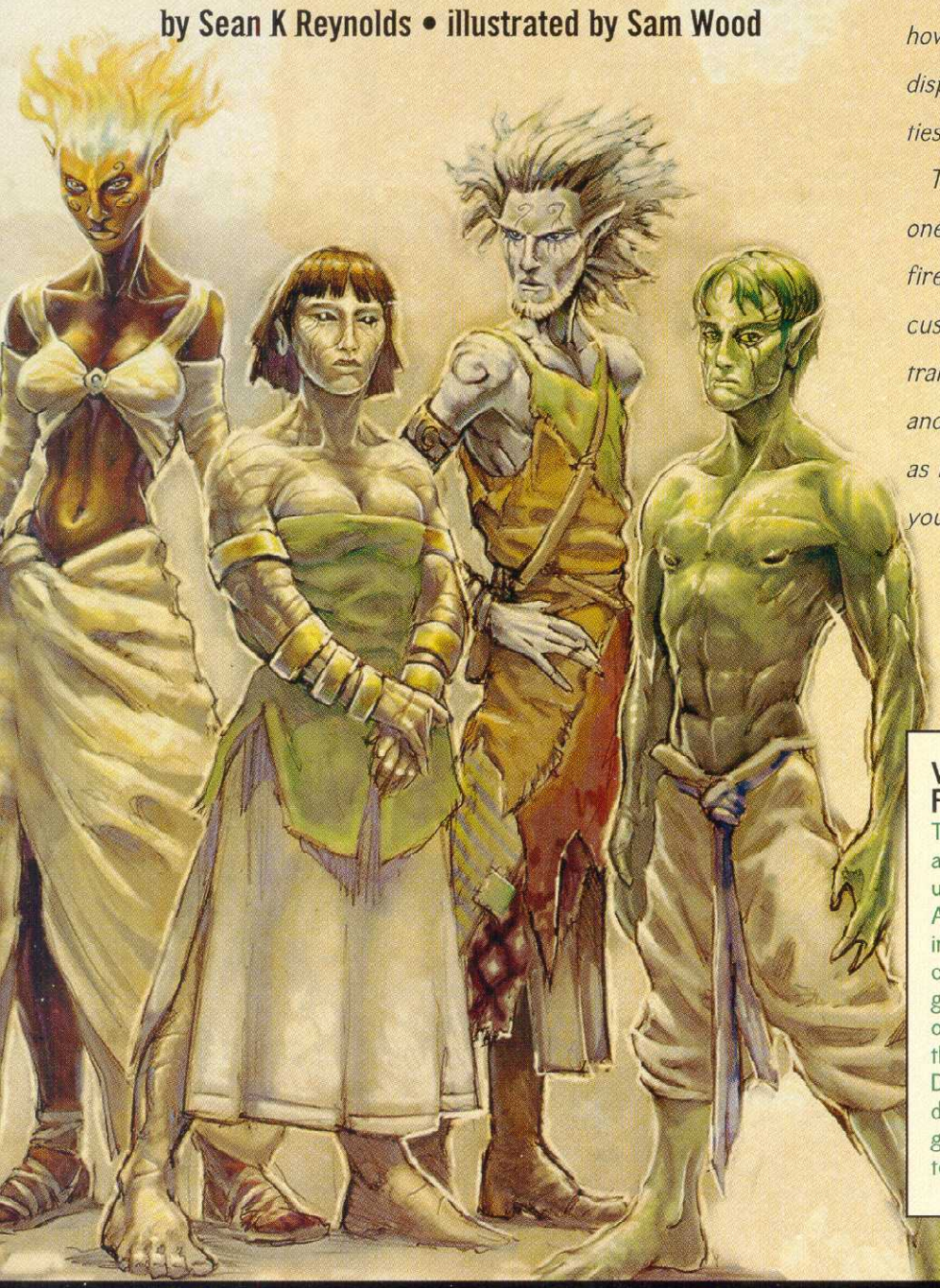
Templates

Celestial	+2
Fiendish	+2
Ghost	+4
Half-Celestial	+5
Half-Dragon	+4
Half-Fiend	+5
Lich	+3
Vampire	+5

The Elemental PLANETOUCHED

Using Genasi in Your Campaign

by Sean K Reynolds • illustrated by Sam Wood



Genasi are beings that are descended from elemental-related outsiders from other planes—such as efreet, djinn, and marids—who have had children with humans. The outsider's extraplanar abilities get passed down to their children, but over time the bloodline dilutes until it is no longer apparent in most descendants. Every few generations however, a child may be born who displays some of the special qualities of her ancestor.

There are four types of genasi, one for each element—air, earth, fire, and water. This article discusses each type, explaining their traits, personalities, and abilities, and offers advice for using them as NPCs or player characters in your campaign.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK.

The feats that appear in this article might appear in an upcoming D&D product. Although we're always looking for feedback on the articles we publish, this article gives you a ready-made opportunity to participate in the development of the D&D game with our R&D department. Any comments, good or bad, should be sent to **scalemail@wizards.com.**

If you are going to play a genasi character in a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, the race has some basic traits you should be aware of. Genasi possess the unusual characteristic of being an outsider native to Faerûn, not a humanoid. This has three principal effects:

First, spells or effects that affect only humanoids, such as a *charm person* or a *dominate person* spell, do not affect planetouched characters.

Second, spells and effects that target extraplanar creatures might affect planetouched characters. For example, the *mace of smiting* and the *sword of the planes* are more effective against outsiders, and are correspondingly more dangerous to a planetouched character. A spell that drives outsiders back to their home planes does not affect planetouched characters, but *banishment*—a spell that removes an outsider from the caster's plane without specifying a return to the outsider's native plane—would work just fine.

Finally, Faerûn's planetouched have lived on Toril long enough for Toril to become, in effect, their native plane. This means that planetouched characters can be raised or resurrected normally, whereas most outsiders cannot be brought back from the dead without the use of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

AIR GENASI

Air genasi are fast and free-willed. Because the traits that identify an air genasi are subtle, many go unrecognized for what they are for many years and are sometimes mistaken for sorcerers, although their inherent arrogance and disregard for their appearance fools people into believing that they are charlatans at natural magic. Those that are overtly different learn quickly to disguise their nature from common folk, at least until they are able to protect themselves and strike out on their own.

Most air genasi are descended from outsiders native to the Elemental Plane of Air and humans. In Faerûn, most air genasi come from bloodlines established over 9,000 years ago by the djinn that founded what is now Calimshan. A few rare air genasi derive from djinn summoned in other parts of the world, and even fewer are said to be born of a line founded by a powerful air mephit sorcerer that lived on the Great Glacier hundreds of years ago. The numbers descended from the servants of air deities such as Akadi, Auril, and Shaundakul are unknown but likely very small. Legends also tell of elves similar to air genasi, possibly descended from followers of the elven goddess Aerdrie Faenya, but it is likely that these legends are just mistaken reports of the avariel (winged elves).

Air genasi look generally human except for one or two distinguishing features related to their elemental ancestor. Some examples of these features are:

- light blue skin
- pale white skin
- white hair
- light blue hair
- a constant slight breeze in the air genasi's presence
- flesh that is cool to the touch
- a voice that can be heard over any nonmagical wind
- sudden movement is accompanied by a whistling wind

Air genasi revel in their unusual nature, although few ever try to locate the being that founded their bloodline (as most are long dead or banished back to the Elemental Plane of Air). Because the Calimshan djinn bloodlines are so old and have suffered many crossbreedings, it is almost impossible to tell by normal means if two air genasi are from the same bloodline. As a result, all air genasi tend to treat each other as "cousins," although in an arrogant and competitive way.

Air genasi have the same life expectancy and age categories as humans.

History

With only a few exceptions, air genasi native to Faerûn are descended from the djinn that once ruled Calimshan. The djinn and djinn nobles often had human concubines, and from these unions were born half-elementals. The half-elementals gained status by serving in the djinn's armies, and their own children inherited some of their elemental nature. When the djinn masters were overthrown, many djinn, half-djinn, and air genasi were slain, driven to another plane, or bound in a magic item such as an iron flask. The surviving air genasi that were able to escape went into hiding or moved to nearby lands. Now air genasi are most common in the Lands of Intrigue, Sword Coast, and the Western Heartlands, and they have mixed enough with the local populations that at least half of them no longer resemble the people of Calimshan.

Outlook

Air genasi, like all of the elemental planetouched, are proud of their heritage,

In Your Campaign

Genasi are more common in a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign because of Faerûn's large number of portals to other worlds. However, they can easily fit into any campaign, even if your world doesn't have portals. Here are some ways you can incorporate these races into your game.

- Genasi are not descended from elemental-related creatures. Instead, they are rare individuals who have been marked by the god of the particular element they exhibit an affinity to. For example, water genasi are touched by a sea god and are expected to serve at the deity's temple in return for the gifts they were blessed with. These genasi may be called upon to perform tasks for their deity throughout their lives.
- Genasi have always lived in your world, but only a handful of individuals know of their existence. In ancient times, they were believed to be the spawn of demons and devils, and they were often killed at birth. Others were hunted down and executed. On the brink of extinction, the few remaining genasi banded together and went into hiding. In this scenario, genasi still live in exclusion, fearing that if the other races learn of their existence, they won't be lucky enough to escape extinction a second time.
- The human race has slowly been evolving for thousands of years, and the genasi are the result. Although quite small in number, those who are born in the evolved form usually feel superior to their human kin. Recently, a genasi cult has arisen that believes genasi are touched by the gods and, therefore, destined to rule over all humanoids. The cult has attracted a large number of followers, and it is currently placing genasi in strategic cities and towns. They wait for a sign from the gods to tell them when to turn on their human brethren.
- Perhaps all the races can be genasi in your campaign. In this case, each race might be associated with a certain element and genasi type. For example, dwarves with earth, elves with water, gnomes with air, and orcs with fire.

regardless of others' opinion of them. They know they are descended from powerful beings, some of them even nobles of that type, and outside of Calimshan most people look upon such things with awe instead of fear. The air genasi are used to being flamboyant with their abilities and expect a certain amount of deference from normal folk. Air genasi view air elementals as dumb brutes, but see djinn and other intelligent air-outsiders as potential rivals for attention and power.

Because they can be of any alignment, air genasi have entered all walks of life, from paladin to necromancer to cleric to rogue, and because they consider themselves children of the sky, they tend to move about a lot over the course of their lives. Air genasi want to see and taste the air in radically different places and consider settling in one place for any length of time confining.

An air genasi's favored class is fighter. Rather than wielding a battleaxe and sporting full plate armor, air genasi tend to become agile, rapier-wielding fighters because of their excellent Dexterity and Intelligence scores. Many develop skills as rogues or wizards, balancing their weaknesses with spells or special skills. By their nature, air genasi make poor bards, divine spellcasters, and sorcerers. Those that do practice magic favor spells involving air and electricity.

Society

Rarely is more than one air genasi born to any particular couple, however, these planetouched see each other as an extended family, and their tendency to wander means that they are more likely than not to find another of their kind at some point in their travels. Air genasi use these times to exchange news of other air genasi, usually in the form of bragging about their own deeds. Air genasi feel no need to defend other air genasi and, in fact, see another air genasi's weakness as an affirmation of their own strength.

In a few rare cases, particularly charismatic air genasi have gathered a few dozen of their own kind to form a mercenary company, cabal of mages, or mercantile group. These individuals sometimes take air genasi children away from human parents so that they can be raised by their own kind. However, air genasi rarely stay together in groups for longer than a year, so these fosterlings usually end up being raised by one or two air genasi that stick together after the group dissolves. Still, these young genasi gain some sense of community and often go on to start their own temporary groups.

Language: Air genasi have no common language, although most learn Auran if only to feel elitist and to share secrets with each other when within earshot of non-genasi. Air genasi also usually learn the language of their parents and may pick up other languages appropriate to their region.

Relations With Other Races: Although they are arrogant about their own abilities, air genasi are smart enough to recognize the talents of the elven race (including half-elves), and they share a similar enjoyment of open, natural spaces. They consider dwarves homebound and narrow-minded, enjoying far too much the stony comfort of a cavern roof above their heads. Gnomes are often regarded little better than dwarves, but the air genasi know that some gnomes love the open sky as much as the elves do, and these are tolerated.

Halflings wander as much as air genasi do, and they are welcome traveling companions to the planetouched. Half-orcs are considered clumsy and brutish but valuable allies in a fight, and so even the haughty air genasi choose their words carefully around these large halfbreeds. Humans are generally accepted, although air genasi consider a typical human's readiness to settle on an unclaimed plot of land annoying and pointless.

Air genasi consider aasimar, tieflings, and other kinds of genasi as similar in many respects to themselves. Both are touched by something out of this world, however, their "taint" isn't as truly awesome and inspiring as the element of air. As a result, air genasi tend to treat these beings as limited but interesting distant relations.

Equipment/Exotic Weapons: Air genasi have no weapon or piece of equipment that is common to their race, because they usually lack a common background or training. However, because each has the innate ability to *levitate,* they are less likely to carry rope or similar climbing equipment, and most would pass over a *ring of feather falling* for a different piece of treasure.

Animals and Pets: Air genasi prefer birds and other flying creatures as animal companions or pets. Some air genasi acquire unusual animals such as flying squirrels, gliding snakes, or oversized insects for this purpose.

Racial Abilities: Air Genasi have the following traits:

- +2 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: Air genasi are quick of hand and sharp of wit, but easily distracted and arrogant.
- Medium-size.
- Air genasi base speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision up to 60 feet.
- *Levitate* (Sp): Air genasi can *levitate* once per day as the spell cast by a 5th-level sorcerer.
- Clerical Focus: An air genasi cleric must choose a deity who grants access to the Air domain and select Air as one of his two domains.
- +1 racial bonus on saving throws against all air spells and effects. This bonus increases by +1 for every five class levels the genasi attains.
- Breathless: Air genasi do not breathe, so they are immune to drowning, suffocation, and attacks that require inhalation (such as some types of poison).
- Racial Feats: Air genasi have access to the Improved Levitation and Elemental Bloodline racial feats. (See the Planetouched Racial Feats sidebar for descriptions of these feats.)
- Outsider: Air genasi are native outsiders.
- Automatic Languages: Common, home region. Bonus Languages: Any (except secret languages, such as Druidic).
- Favored Class: Fighter.
- Level Adjustment +1: Air genasi are slightly more powerful and gain levels more slowly than most of the other common races of Faerûn. (See the Powerful Races sidebar for more information.)

EARTH GENASI

Earth genasi are patient, stubborn, and contemplative in their decision-making. Marked at birth with obvious traits reflecting their heritage, earth genasi are often shunned by others their age, but their physical gifts make them able to defend themselves against most cruel attackers. Their strength and girth mean that they sometimes become bullies, attracting sycophants out of fear and respect for their power.

At least three-quarters of the earth genasi in Faerûn are the descendants of outsiders native to the Elemental Plane of Earth and humans. The rest are descended from earth deities or servants of earth deities. Most of the elemental bloodlines originate in the North, particularly near the Spine of the World, as natural portals to the Elemental Plane of Earth form there, allowing meetings between natives of both planes. The bloodlines spring up wherever worship of earth deities is common. It is thought that the Ludwakazar clan of shield dwarves deep in the Earthspurs in Impiltur and the Tobarin family of rock gnomes in the Great Dale have elemental blood, but both are mute on the question.

Earth genasi have mostly human features except for one or two distinguishing traits related to their elemental ancestor. Some examples of these features are:

- earthlike texture to the skin
- rough facial features
- eyes that look like black pits
- eyes that look like gems
- a gravelly voice
- very large hands and feet
- iron gray hair
- the genasi sweats mud instead of water
- a metallic sheen to the genasi's skin or hair

Earth genasi, like all elemental planetouched, are proud of their nature and abilities, but unlike air genasi who are boastful, their pride is quiet and noble. Earth genasi are pragmatic about their parentage, usually not going out of their way to learn their ancestry but not avoiding the topic either. Earth genasi have no special relationship with others of their kind, although they seem to prefer others that share their physical differences.

Earth genasi have the same life expectancy and age categories as humans.

History

Earth genasi have no common history. Most of their bloodlines derive from chance meetings between humans and earth outsiders, and even those descended from agents of earth deities are spread across the world with no common purpose. Because the outsider features often skip a generation or two, bloodlines seem to disappear for decades only to pop up again unexpectedly in a family that had forgotten its ancestry. Because earth genasi are slightly less fertile than humans, some bloodlines disappear altogether. Because of their varied origins, both planar and geographical, earth genasi can be from any human racial group.

Outlook

Proud of their heritage despite the opinions of others, earth genasi know they are born of beings touched by the might of the essence of earth. They feel a strong kinship to the earth, and as a result, they feel best when their feet are on the ground. They even prefer to go barefoot if appropriate for the weather and environment (earth genasi develop thick callouses easily and can even walk on gravel without discomfort). Earth genasi respect their earth elemental cousins for their strength but are usually indifferent to other earth elemental creatures.

Earth genasi tend to stake out a piece of land as their own and defend it stubbornly. This makes them particularly valuable homesteaders in frontier regions like the Silver Marches. A few unusual earth genasi exhibit a strange form of wanderlust; these rare earth genasi wish to plant their feet on every nation's soil before they die. Such a journey might take thirty years, but with methodical determination, certain genasi have become famous for their long-distance travels.

Most earth genasi are fighters of some sort, whether fighter, ranger, or barbarian. They usually learn styles of combat that rely on their gifts, so an earth genasi armsman is either capable of incredible bloodshed or of enduring devastating attacks and remaining unshaken. Earth genasi wizards are uncommon, but not unknown. Those that do become wizards often learn spells to enhance their fighting skills or become masters of earth magic.

Society

Earth genasi are among the most isolated of all of the elemental planetouched. They are indifferent to others of their kind, believing that each should rely on her own strength to persevere. The only time this emotional barrier is breached is when two or more genasi with the same physical

PLANETOUCHED RACIAL FEATS

Breathing Link [Genasi]
You can allow a person adjacent to you to breathe water.

Prerequisite: Base Will save +2, water genasi.

Benefit: As a free action on your turn, you may select one creature within five feet of you and give that creature the ability to breathe water as easily as you do. This ability renews automatically for that creature until you direct the ability to another creature or withdraw your power from it (a free action). The creature's ability to breathe water ends immediately if you are separated by more than five feet or if you die, at which point the creature begins to drown if it is still underwater. This ability does not hamper the creature's ability to breathe air, nor does it change the creature's ability to swim.

Special: You may select this feat more than once. Each time you take this feat, you may affect an additional creature with this ability. The affected creatures need only to remain within five feet of you (not each other). If one creature exceeds the reach of this ability, it has no effect on any other creatures you are helping.

Elemental Bloodline [Genasi]
You have taken on some of the aspects of the type of element that infuses your flesh.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save +5, genasi (air, earth, fire, or water).

Benefit: You gain a +4 saving throw bonus to saving throws against poison, sleep, paralysis, or stunning. You also have a 25% chance to turn a critical hit or a sneak attack into a normal hit (as if you were wearing light fortification armor). If you are wearing fortification armor or a similar item, or you have an ability with a similar effect, use the one that has the larger percentage chance.

Healing Flames [Genasi]
You can draw energy from open flames to heal yourself.

Prerequisite: Base Will save +3, fire genasi.

Benefit: When you use your *control flame* spell-like ability, you may instead touch the flame and heal yourself a number of hit points of damage depending upon the size of the fire.

traits meet. The superficial resemblance awakens an echo of sympathy and kinship in the earth genasi, and these similarities often lead to deep friendships and even marriages.

It is among these groups that small clans of earth genasi form, usually military-based groups such as a mercenary company, a squadron of rangers, or a gang of barbarian thugs. The bonds between these individuals can grow very strong; bards tell of entire bands of earth genasi meeting to punish a cruel lover or person responsible for the death of one of the band. Because the genasi are patient, sometimes this revenge comes about months or even years after the event, usually in a surprising and painful encounter.

Because of their strength, earth genasi are often the dominant person in their relationships. They are known to collect like-minded warriors about them, genasi or not, and carve out small baronies for themselves in isolated lands. Several leaders in the history of the Border Kingdoms have been earth genasi.

Language: There is no common language among earth genasi, and they feel no urge to learn Terran unless they are spellcasters and need to communicate with summoned elementals. An earth genasi usually learns the language of her parents and sometimes other languages spoken in her native region.

Relations With Other Races: Earth genasi get along well with gnomes and dwarves, but they find elves and half-elves too weak and puny to be taken seriously. Halflings would almost be in the same category as elves except that they show a remarkable talent for survival, which the genasi respect. Oddly, most elves and half-elves appreciate an earth genasi's ties to the land, even though the feeling is not reciprocated.

As earth genasi usually have human parents, they get along fine with humans. They have no bias for or against other kinds of planetouched, even the air genasi, who they consider flighty but skilled. Half-orcs are intriguing to earth genasi, for they have the hot blood of a much stronger race tempered with human nature, much as earth genasi do. As a result, the earth genasi consider half-orcs lesser but similar kin.

Equipment/Exotic Weapons: Earth genasi have no traditional racial weapons or equipment, although an unusually high number of them prefer to carry weapons that they themselves forged. Common weapons are implements that are useful in practical situations as well as combat, such as hammers, axes, and picks.

Animals and Pets: When earth genasi take pets or animal companions, they usually are strong and squat creatures, such as mastiffs, badgers, and bears. A few have a fondness for snakes, preferring constrictors to venomous ones.

Racial Abilities: Earth genasi have the following racial traits:

- +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: Earth genasi are strong and tough, but somewhat oblivious and stubborn.
- Medium-size.
- Earth genasi base speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision up to 60 feet.
- *Pass Without Trace* (Sp): Earth genasi can *pass without trace* once per day as the spell cast by a 5th-level druid.
- +1 racial bonus on saving throws against earth spells and effects. This bonus increases by +1 for every five class levels the genasi attains.
- Clerical Focus: An earth genasi cleric must choose a deity who grants access to the Earth domain and select Earth as one of her two domains.
- Racial Feats: Earth genasi have access to the Stone Colossus, Stone Slide, and Elemental Bloodline racial feats. (See the Planetouched Racial Feats sidebar for descriptions of these feats.)
- Outsider: Earth genasi are native outsiders.
- Automatic Languages: Common, home region. Bonus Languages: Any (except secret languages, such as Druidic).
- Favored Class: Fighter.
- Level Adjustment +1: Earth genasi are slightly more powerful and gain levels more slowly than most of the other common races of Faerûn. (See the Powerful Races sidebar for more information.)

FIRE GENASI

The stereotypical fire genasi is hot-blooded and quick to anger, and they have earned that reputation. Mercurial, proud, and often fearless, they are not content to sit and watch the world pass them by. Fire genasi have obvious physical traits that mark them as different from humans, and they are often the target of cruel pranks in their childhood and adolescent years. Some fire genasi are able to use their quick wits to turn the tables on their tormentors, while others find that their barbed words only make their foes more angry. Many fire genasi are destroyed as infants by their own parents, who fear that they are demonspawn.

Most fire genasi in Faerûn are descended from the efreet that once ruled Calimshan. Planetouched of this derivation live all over the Lands of Intrigue, and some have traveled away from their ancestral homeland to escape the fear and prejudice that Calishites bear for genies. Chult, the Lake of Steam, and Unther also have a small number of fire genasi, for those lands bear volcanos that sometimes act as natural portals to the Elemental Plane of Fire, allowing efreet and other fiery outsiders to make contact with humans. A large family of fire-genasi-like halflings was known to live in Unther, but the war with Mulhorad has displaced them, and their current whereabouts are unknown.

Fire genasi have mostly human features except for one or two exceptional traits related to their elemental ancestor. Some examples of these features are:

- charcoal gray skin
- deep red skin
- red or orange hair that waves like flames
- eyes that glow when the genasi is angry
- unusually warm skin
- large red teeth
- a body odor that smells like smoke

Fire genasi are proud of their ancestry and consider themselves superior to normal humans, although the smarter ones don't make an issue of it. Because the efreet-descended genasi of Calimshan have almost no chance of finding their original elemental ancestor (who have long since been slain, banished, or imprisoned when their empire was overthrown), they make no effort to do so, simply enjoying the gifts their ancestor's blood has granted them. Fire genasi enjoy the company of their own kind and have been known to form elite groups of mages or fighters that hire themselves out on the basis of their skill and heritage. They also have been known to adopt the fire genasi children of human parents.

Fire genasi have the same life expectancy and age categories as humans.

History

Most fire genasi in Faerûn are the result of human-efreet unions that occurred thousands of years ago in Calimshan. These efreet rulers took human lovers, and their half-elemental offspring served their outsider parent as guards, advisors, or diplomats, eventually having children of their own, which as often as not were fire genasi. The overthrow of the genies resulted in a great slaughter and subsequent scattering of all of the planetouched in that land. Since that time, those who carry the bloodline of efreet have mixed with humans in other lands. Now fire genasi of these bloodlines might be from any human racial group and often don't resemble the people of Calimshan at all.

Fire genasi that originate in other lands have no common history, as their bloodlines are rare and non-associated occurrences.

Outlook

Fire genasi are a proud people, knowing that they are born of great genies. They prefer to dress elegantly and flamboyantly, reveling in their differences and advertising their superior taste and abilities. Fire genasi respect their pure elemental kin, and most treat efreet and other large fire outsiders with a great deal of courtesy and respect, both out of a sense of the creature's power and as a subtle thankfulness for their own bloodline-granted talents. Because they have such high opinions of themselves, fire genasi often elect themselves the leader and spokesperson of a group, even if they have no particular talents in those areas.

Fire genasi are impatient and don't take well to pursuits that require a lot of time and study. They like to travel, if only to escape the presence of their enemies or of people that frustrate them. Fire genasi enjoy collecting treasure, preferring jewelry to bags of coins.

Fire genasi make smart fighters, but because of their heated bloodlust and quick tempers, most become barbarians. More fire genasi become sorcerers than wizards, even though their natural talents would indicate otherwise. Because they would much rather talk about themselves than other people, and because they have short tempers, fire genasi make poor bards. It is rare for fire genasi to become paladins, but it isn't unknown.

Society

Fire genasi are competitive among their own kin, but it is rarely intentionally lethal. Even two fire genasi of radically different alignments or philosophies are capable of putting down their swords for a talk on elemental nature and comparative histories, and should they come to blows they are more likely to ask for and grant mercy than slay each other outright. Although they have hot tempers, arguments between fire genasi quickly burn out, although their allies or minions might suffer the smoldering aftereffects.

Other than this friendly banter, fire genasi often go for years without seeing one of their own kind. Descended from beings that have a strong, close (if argumentative) society, fire genasi still have a tendency to collect in groups when circumstances allow. Children raised by two fire genasi parents see a wide range of emotions in their parents, from phenomenal passion and epic poetry to screaming matches and thrown furniture. This is accepted as normal, and they are taught that a life not lived vigorously is not worth living.

Language: Fire genasi share no racial language, although some learn Ignan for the sake of cultivating an exotic air. A fire genasi usually learns the language of her parents and other languages spoken in her native region.

Relations With Other Races: Fire genasi consider themselves above all other races except humans because of their own human blood. Dwarves, gnomes, and halflings are too short to be taken seriously, elves are too focused on the long-term consequences of every action, and half-orcs are too stupid. Earth genasi are too slow to act, water genasi are too dispassionate, air genasi are too flighty, and aasimar and tieflings are too morose. Fire genasi quickly become impatient with the "failings" of other races and rarely make friends with anyone but humans or other fire genasi.

Doing so uses your *control flame* ability for the day. Touching the flame causes you no harm when you use this ability, but if you enter the flame, are otherwise exposed to more than just its edge, or remain touching it for more than 1 round, you take damage from the fire.

Fire Size	Example	HP
Fine	Tindertwig	1
Diminutive	Torch	1d3
Tiny	Small campfire	1d6
Small	Large campfire	2d6
Medium-Size	Forge	3d6
Large	Bonfire	4d6
Huge	Burning shack or tree	5d6
Gargantuan	Burning tavern	6d6
Colossal	Burning inn	7d6

Rapid Swimming [Genasi]

You are one with the water.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save +2, water genasi.

Benefit: Your swim speed increases to 50 feet.

Normal: A water genasi normally has a swim speed of 30 feet.

Stone Colossus [Genasi]

You can focus a part of your power to increase the toughness of your skin.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save +3, earth genasi.

Benefit: When you use the attack action or full attack action in melee, you can take a penalty of as much as -5 on your attack and add the same number (up to +5) to your Armor Class as a natural armor bonus. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and Armor Class last until your next action.

Stone Slide [Genasi]

You have attuned yourself to stone to such an extent that you can merge with it for a short time.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save +4, earth genasi.

Benefit: Instead of using your spell-like ability to *pass without trace*, you may instead *meld into stone* as per the spell cast by a 5th-level druid. Doing so uses youtr ability to *pass without trace* for the day.

Improved Levitation [Genasi]

You have learned to use part of your *levitate* spell-like ability at a time, allowing multiple uses with a shorter duration.

Prerequisite: Naturally able to *levitate* as a spell-like ability.

Equipment/Exotic Weapons: Fire genasi prefer keen-edged weapons such as scimitars, falchions, and bladed polearms. They have no traditional equipment or armor.

Animals and Pets: Fire genasi prefer pets that are fast and heat tolerant, such as desert lizards. Some sorcerers that live in the wastelands near Calimshan have learned how to acquire a tiny monstrous centipede or tiny monstrous scorpion as a familiar. Such familiars are treated the same way as hairy spider familiars, as described on page 27 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*.

Racial Abilities: Fire genasi have the following traits:

- +2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma: Fire genasi have bright minds, but are impatient and quick to anger.
- Medium-size.
- Fire genasi base speed is 30 feet.
- +1 racial bonus on saving throws against fire spells and effects. This bonus increases by +1 for every five class levels the genasi attains.
- Darkvision up to 60 feet.
- *Control Flame* (Sp): Fire genasi can cause a nonmagical fire within 10 feet of them to diminish to the level of coals or flare to the brightness of daylight and double the normal radius of its illumination. This ability does not change the heat output or fuel consumption of the fire source, lasts 5 minutes, and may be done once per day. They use this ability as 5th-level sorcerers.
- Clerical Focus: A fire genasi cleric must choose a deity who grants access to the Fire domain and select Fire as one of her two domains.
- Racial Feats: Fire genasi have access to the Healing Flames and Elemental Bloodline racial feats. (See the Planetouched Racial Feats sidebar for descriptions of these feats.)
- Outsider: Fire genasi are native outsiders.
- Automatic Languages: Common, home region. Bonus Languages: Any (except secret languages, such as Druidic).
- Favored Class: Fighter.
- Level Adjustment +1: Fire genasi are slightly more powerful and gain levels more slowly than most of the other common races of Faerûn. (See the Powerful Races sidebar for more information.)

WATER GENASI

Water genasi are patient and independent, used to solving problems on their own and not afraid to take a lot of time doing so. At times they are like terrible storms, fierce and destructive, but most often they present a tranquil appearance despite whatever emotions run underneath their quiet surface. Water genasi are often abandoned by their human parents and raised by aquatic creatures such as sea elves, dolphins, locatha, merfolk, sahuagin, or even aboleth. Water genasi usually leave their parents upon reaching maturity, taking to the open sea in order to explore, learn, and develop their own personality and place in the world.

Most water genasi are descended from a water elemental outsider such as a marid (water genie) or triton. A rare few are born to outsider servants of the evil water goddess Umberlee (although it is not known why these matings eventually produce water genasi instead of tieflings). Sea elves tell of a lost line of sea elf planetouched descended from minions of Deep Sashelas, but they were thought to have been wiped out by an army of sahuagin over 500 years ago, and in any case are not true water genasi.

Water genasi look generally human except for one distinguishing feature related to their elemental ancestor. Some examples of these features are:

- lightly scaled skin
- flesh that is clammy to the touch
- blue-green skin or hair
- excessive perspiration
- hair that moves as if underwater
- blue-black eyes
- a muffled voice that sounds like it is coming from underwater

Water genasi feel that they are unique and superior to the humans that bore them, and they have little or no interest in others of their kind. Only in large communities of sea elves are more than one water genasi likely to spend much time together.

Water genasi have the same life expectancy and age categories as humans.

History

Nearly every water genasi can be traced back to a unique crossbreed between a water outsider and a human. Water genasi have no common history, and although most of them are born in or near the Sea of Fallen Stars, no known records exist of water genasi trying to build a community of their own kind, although from time to time an aquatic hero shows up in the history books, usually associated with rescuing drowning sailors or thwarting sahuagin attacks. Records also exist of water genasi villains. These villains range from pirates who love to drown their enemies to blue-haired leaders of merrow raiding parties.

Because of their varied origins, water genasi can be from any human racial group.

Outlook

Water genasi take pride in their special abilities and can be boastful of them at times. Tougher than humans and able to breathe water, these genasi sometimes view human sailors and naval merchants as vulnerable fools who are as likely to die at sea as they are to get seasick. The people of the Sea of Fallen Stars are familiar enough with the stories of water genasi to recognize them and ignore their rude behavior.

Water genasi have the best of both worlds. They can walk on land for an indefinite time (unlike sea elves, whom they secretly pity) and can always retreat to the tranquil depths of the ocean. Often loners, they sometimes establish a home in a remote underwater cave, going for years without encountering another intelligent being. They feel a kinship to other aquatic creatures, particularly tritons and water elementals, who can easily outswim the genasi.

Water genasi tend to be neutral and therefore avoid extremes in politics, opinion, or career. Some find a quiet spot to call home, others enjoy riding the currents for months, allowing the water to take them places hundreds of miles away.

Their favored class is fighter, but they often multiclass into another and shift their efforts between the two classes. In fighting, they prefer styles and weapons that unbalance, bind, or disarm their opponents.

Society

Water genasi have no society of their own, and they often adopt traits of the people who raised them. Thus, a water genasi raised by sea elves is likely to

believe in personal freedoms and good behavior, while one raised by sahuagin will tend to be bloodthirsty and militaristic. Water genasi from different cultures are often as radically different from one another as a quiet spring is to a raging waterfall.

Water genasi do not prefer the company of other water genasi. If anything, it makes them feel less special and less unique in the context of the other beings they live near, and so they rarely live in the same communities, and none have been known to marry. This keeps the population of repeat-generation water genasi low, with new genasi coming from new bloodlines or from a line that skipped a generation.

The water genasi's nature makes them unlikely leaders. A water genasi is more likely to guard or support a person they respect and admire than be a person that attracts or welcomes subordinates.

Language: All water genasi born on the Sea of Fallen Stars (which is most of them) learn Common because of the heavy mercantile traffic. Many also learn Aquan in order to converse with other aquatic creatures, and water genasi that live with or near sea elves usually learn Elven as well. Those raised by sahuagin learn Sahuagin.

Spellcasting Traditions: Water genasi prefer spells that produce cold, ice, snow, and water. Water genasi spellcasters are usually clerics or druids, for they rarely have the talent for sorcery, and water ruins scrolls and spellbooks (although at least one water genasi wizard has developed a method for scribing "scrolls" made of carved shells).

Relations With Other Races: Water genasi feel closest to their adopted race and indifferent to all others. Aquatic creatures and those that can naturally breathe water are treated less coolly (unless such a creature is a natural enemy of the genasi's adopted race, such as a sahuagin-raised genasi confronted by a triton). They hold no special animosity toward fiery creatures or fire genasi, and they see a similarity between themselves and flying creatures, although they are quick to point out that natural fliers have to come to rest on land eventually while water genasi and other sea creatures can live in the water indefinitely. They laugh at and ridicule aquaphobic creatures, and dwarves are frequently the target of their jokes and pranks.

Equipment/Exotic Weapons: Water genasi that live in the water use items favored by other aquatic races—nets instead

Benefit: You may use your *levitate* spell-like ability in 10-minute increments instead of all at once. The number of times per day that you may now use the ability at this shorter duration is equal to your caster level.

For example, if you are an air genasi, you normally have the ability to *levitate* once per day as a spell-like ability as if cast by a 5th-level sorcerer, allowing you to *levitate* once per day for up to 50 minutes. With this feat, you can now *levitate* five times per day, each time for up to 10 minutes.

If you could *levitate* more than once per day, multiply your caster level by the number of times per day to get the total number of shorter uses of *levitate* that you have. For example, a creature that could *levitate* two times per day as a spell-like ability as if cast by a 5th-level sorcerer would be able to *levitate* 10 (2 x 5) times per day, each time for up to 10 minutes.

PlayStation 2

Don't Stumble Around in the Dark

Visit the web site dedicated to giving you the last word on how to survive the greatest 1-Player challenge in the history of RPG's!

www.KINGSFIELD.Agetec.com

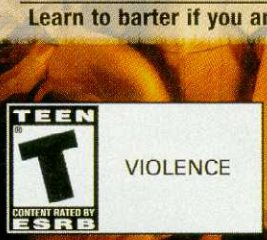
www.KINGSFIELD.Agetec.com

Explore more then 40 levels of a subterranean realm lost in time.

Arm yourself with magic items capable of unleashing massive spells.

There are more than 90 levels of power for your character.

Learn to barter if you are a bit short on gold.



VIOLENCE

FROM SOFTWARE™

agetec™

www.agetec.com

© 1994-2002 FromSoftware,Inc. FromSoftware and the FromSoftware logo are trademarks of FromSoftware,Inc. All rights reserved. King's Field and the King's Field logo, The Ancient City and The Ancient City logo, Agetec and the Agetec logo are trademarks of Agetec Inc.

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

of pouches, stabbing weapons instead of slashing or bludgeoning weapons, and so on. Water genasi favor magical nets and items that can be used underwater, such as a *trident of warning* or a *horn of the tritons.* The first *coral dolphin figurine of wondrous power* was created by a water genasi mage.

Animals and Pets: Water genasi that live in the water prefer dolphins, octopi, sharks, and other aquatic animals as pets and animal companions. Those that live on the land and in the water prefer animals that can live in both environments, such as crocodiles, otters, and some snakes and birds.

Racial Abilities: Water genasi have the following traits:

- +2 Constitution, -2 Charisma: Water genasi have high endurance, but are cold and emotionally distant.
- Medium-size.
- Water genasi base speed is 30 feet. They swim at a speed of 30 feet.
- Darkvision up to 60 feet.
- *Create Water* (Sp): Water genasi can *create water* once per day as the spell cast by a 5th-level druid.
- +1 racial bonus on saving throws against water spells and effects. This bonus increases by +1 for every 5 class levels the genasi attains.
- Water genasi breathe water as an extraordinary ability.
- Clerical Focus: A water genasi cleric must choose a deity who grants access to the Water domain and select Water as one of his two domains.
- Racial Feats: Water genasi have access to the Rapid Swimming, Elemental Bloodline, and Breathing Link racial feats. (See the Planetouched Racial Feats sidebar for descriptions of these feats.)
- Outsider: Water genasi are native outsiders.
- Automatic Languages: Common, home region. Bonus Languages: Any (except secret languages, such as Druidic).
- Favored Class: Fighter.
- Level Adjustment +1: Water genasi are slightly more powerful and gain levels more slowly than most of the other common races of Faerûn. (See the Powerful Races sidebar for more information.) D

POWERFUL RACES

Genasi are significantly more powerful than the races in the *Player's Handbook.* To maintain the balance of power between player characters, adjustments have to be made to characters of these races so that the game remains fair and enjoyable for all involved.

All genasi have a racial trait called "Level Adjustment," which, for all types of genasi, is a 1. When creating a character of this race, add the Level Adjustment to the class levels of the creature. This determines their character level and decides how many experience points the character needs to gain a class level (see below) and how much gear the character should have (according to Table 2-24: Starting Equipment for PCs Above 1st Level in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The character level is also used to determine if a character of this race is appropriate to join an existing party. For example, if the DM would not allow a 2nd-level character to join a group of 1st-level adventurers, a genasi with a level adjustment of +1 and a class level should not be allowed either.

Genasi use the normal experience chart according to their character level. They can also use an adjusted XP chart based on their level adjustment. The end result is the same. For example, Terrel the 1st-level water genasi fighter (level adjustment +1) has a character level of 2. Normally a 1st-level character begins play with 0 XP and needs to reach 1,000 XP to reach 2nd level, but because Terrel's character level is 2, he starts with 1,000 XP (just like a 2nd-level character) and needs to reach 3,000 XP to reach 3rd level (level adjustment +2 + 1 = 3), just like a 2nd-level character on the way to 3rd-level. Terrel would pick up a third character level at 6,000 XP (level adjustment +3 +1 = 4), a fourth at 10,000 XP (level adjustment +4 + 1 = 5), and so on– always one level behind a human with the same XP total.

This system allows a DM to give players a set XP total for their characters, and they can build characters with any race and class combination and still be about the same power level despite the overall differences between powerful and standard races. For example, Stacie decides to give each of her players 10,000 experience points to build a character. Jesse makes a 4th-level fire genasi barbarian (character level 5), Matthew makes a 3rd-level drow rogue (character level 5), Erik makes a 5th-level human cleric, and Lisa makes a 2nd-level svirfneblin fighter (character level 5).

When considering making a character of these races, ask yourself: Is the initial jump in power worth the long-term decrease in the speed your character gains levels?

Essentially, your character needs your character level x 1000 to reach the next level. This adjustment is summarized in the table below.

LEVEL ADJUSTMENT EXPERIENCE CHART

Level	Normal XP	LA+1 XP (Aasimar, Tiefling Genasi)	LA+2 XP (Drow, Duergar)	LA+3 XP (Svirfneblin)
1	0	1,000	3,000	6,000
2	1,000	3,000	6,000	10,000
3	3,000	6,000	10,000	15,000
4	6,000	10,000	15,000	21,000
5	10,000	15,000	21,000	28,000
6	15,000	21,000	28,000	36,000
7	21,000	28,000	36,000	45,000
8	28,000	36,000	45,000	55,000
9	36,000	45,000	55,000	66,000
10	45,000	55,000	66,000	78,000
11	55,000	66,000	78,000	91,000
12	66,000	78,000	91,000	105,000
13	78,000	91,000	105,000	120,000
14	91,000	105,000	120,000	136,000
15	105,000	120,000	136,000	153,000
16	120,000	136,000	153,000	171,000
17	136,000	153,000	171,000	190,000
18	153,000	171,000	190,000	210,000
19	171,000	190,000	210,000	231,000
20	190,000	210,000	231,000	253,000

Campaigning with Class

Customizing Your Campaign with Prestige Classes

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Mike May

Is every wizard in your game a member of the same school of thought, or do your arcane casters follow strange, hidden paths to power? Are you happy with every trained soldier in the army as a fighter, or do your mounted knights, elite archers, and veteran skirmishers need wildly varying skill sets? Are your master healers, experienced exorcists, and mighty templars all simple clerics, or do you want more diversity in your divinity? Is every rogue cut from the same cloth, or do rival guilds use unique training methods to create specialized burglars for every type of crime? Whenever your answer calls for increased specialization, you can look to the prestige class for assistance, but which prestige classes should you use?

If you want a way to make your campaign more unique, try creating a custom list of prestige classes available in your game. Not only does this pare the prodigious variety of existing classes down to a more manageable list, the task of creating the list can provide you with plenty of ideas on how to develop your campaign. This article shows you how to develop such a list with an example campaign: Bloodlines.

Making a List

When evaluating a prestige class for inclusion in your campaign, ask yourself: Does my campaign world need a specialist in this niche? Not every role in your game requires a specialist; if the class's area of expertise is little used in your world, you probably don't need to feature it. On the other hand, whenever generality threatens to obliterate significant differences in campaign roles, you can use prestige classes to emphasize such contrasts.

For instance, if all the monks in your game hail from a single monastery, you might not need the variety presented by prestige classes that favor the martial arts. On the other hand, if your game features a variety of martial arts schools and styles, the prestige class offers a golden opportunity to highlight those differences.

When starting out, don't worry about setting yourself an arbitrary limit of prestige classes to use. Instead, let your ideas flow unhindered, moving organically from one decision to the next. You can always come back later and adjust your list.

Categorization

Most prestige classes, like the core D&D classes, fall into one (or more) of these four categories: arcane spellcasters (sorcerers and wizards, but also bards); combat specialists (barbarians, fighters, monks, paladins, and rangers); divine spellcasters (clerics and druids, but also paladins and rangers); and skill users (bards and rogues, plus some barbarians, druids, monks, and rangers). Examining each category separately can help you

focus on the areas of expertise held by characters found in your campaign. Of course, since many classes fall into more than one category, keep an open mind when evaluating each category. You might find that a decision made in one category affects choices in another.

Arcane Spellcasters

What role do arcane spellcasters play in your campaign? For instance, are they part of normal society, or are they shunned outcasts? Do they belong to mighty guilds, or are they loners? Do wizards make up a merchant class of magic-wielding artisans, or do they dominate society as its rightful rulers? The more plentiful and common arcane spellcasters are in your game, the more likely it is that you'll need a variety of prestige classes to specialize their roles.

In the Bloodlines campaign, arcane spellcasters play a typical role for the D&D game. There's no special mystique about their powers, and society gives mighty arcanists the respect they deserve. However, no large centralized guilds exist; any wizardly organization in the campaign is small or scattered.

Thus, prestige classes which rely on such large organizations, such as the mage of the arcane order (T&B), don't exist. On the other hand, if a player wants to be a loremaster (DMG), the world has room for the player to create an organization of loremasters called the League of Scrolls—a loose group of knowledge-sharing characters scattered across the continent. Since elemental cults play a part in the world's ancient history, a few elemental savants (T&B) still exist. Halfling wizards tend toward the arcane trickster (T&B).

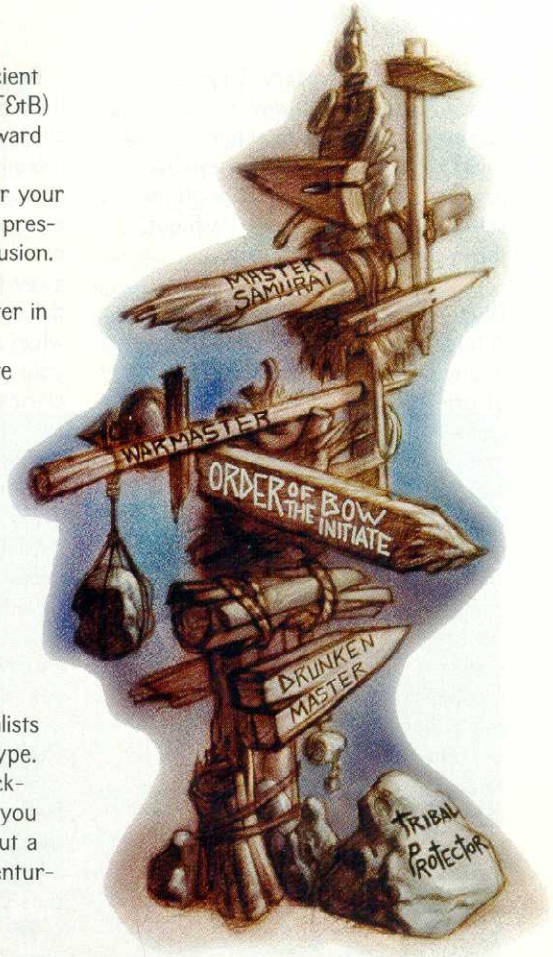
You can make similar choices for your campaign by taking a look at each prestige class and evaluating it for inclusion. Remember that you're not simply checking whether or not a character in your world would like to have the powers of the prestige class; you're evaluating whether or not the idea is something you want to incorporate into your world. The alienist (T&B) is a great prestige class, but it has a very distinct flavor; summoning disgusting creatures from beyond reality doesn't suit a campaign based on Arthurian legend.

Combat Specialists

In most campaigns, combat specialists are the most plentiful character type. Fighters and their ilk form the backbone of most D&D games—while you might consider adventuring without a wizard, cleric, or rogue, few adventuring parties seriously contemplate entering the dungeon without someone providing muscle and combat prowess.

Decide what roles such characters play in the campaign. Are most fighters soldiers, or do they belong to guilds? Do you have orders of knighthood, schools of martial arts, or barbarian clans with their own unique outlook on combat? Do divinely inspired warriors owe their allegiance to specific faiths, or can they hail from any walk of life?

Fighters make up the bulk of the "skilled combatants" in the Bloodlines campaign, but most simply use the fighter's built-in customization (via feats) to specialize in various areas of expertise. Many professional fighters end up entering one of several different "defensive" prestige classes. For instance, trained bodyguards tend toward the devoted defender (S&F) class, while halfling outriders (S&F) protect the travelling caravans of that race. The arcane archers (DMG) accept only those of elven blood, and all who enter pledge their service to the elven defense forces guarding the tiny forest kingdom of Brithonen. Similarly, the dwarven defender (DMG) and stonelord (*Dragon* #278) guard dwarven strongholds against the goblin hordes.



Fighter-style prestige classes that focus on weapon choice, such as the lasher (S&F), master of chains (S&F), and weapon master (S&F) exist, although they generally belong to small, elite groups that guard their specialized knowledge from outsiders. For campaign reasons (see Divine Spellcasters, below), the cavalier (S&F)—an archetypal prestige class that probably finds its way into many games—doesn't exist in significant numbers. Don't be afraid to make similar choices—if a class just doesn't fit (and you don't want to build a role for it), leave it out. You can always add it in later if inspiration strikes.

Both paladins and rangers are closely affiliated with specific religious faiths in the Bloodlines campaign and thus are discussed with divine spellcasters, below. But even among those divine warriors, many follow paths similar to those set out for fighters, above.

Monks and barbarians are much rarer in the Bloodlines campaign, so no prestige classes are dedicated to these characters. Barbarians hail from the Frozen North, and appear in the game only as lone wanderers far from home. Monks are all but unknown, trained in a

REFERENCES

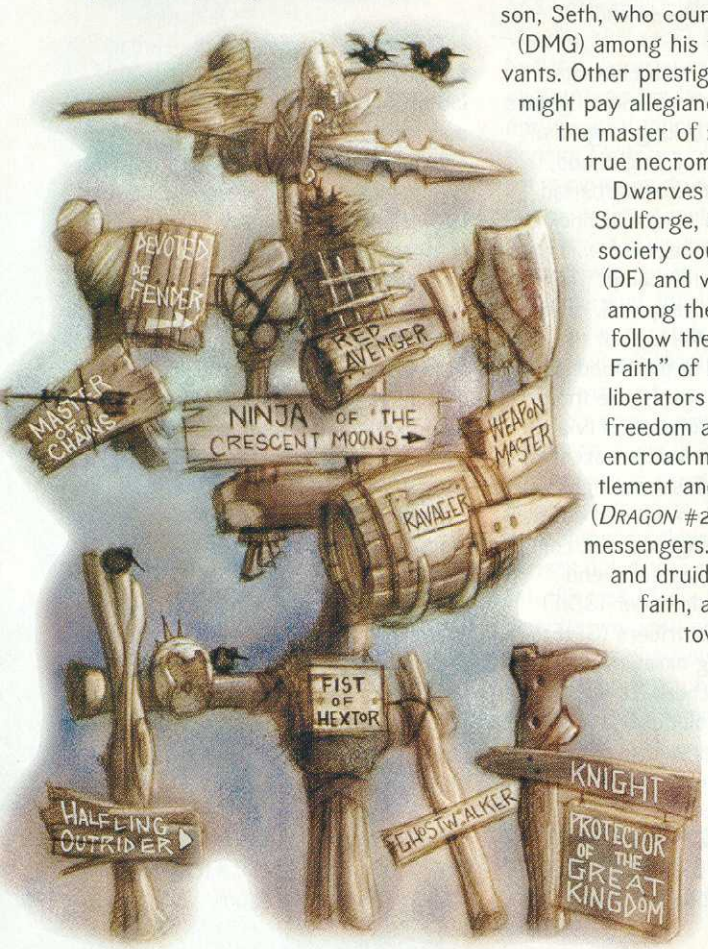
This article names many prestige classes from several products and *Dragon Magazine* issues. In order to help you locate them, abbreviations appear after each prestige class's name. The meanings of these abbreviations are as follows:

DF	*Defenders of the Faith*
DMG	*Dungeon Master's Guide*
FR	*Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*
MF	*Magic of Faerûn*
MP	*Manual of the Planes*
MW	*Masters of the Wild*
S&S	*Song and Silence*
S&F	*Sword and Fist*
T&B	*Tome and Blood*

single hidden monastery deep in the Shard Mountains. However, should the campaign move in a direction that featured more characters of these backgrounds, it would be appropriate to select prestige classes to "flesh out" those character archetypes.

Divine Spellcasters

A huge opportunity for specialization in any D&D game exists in the variety of priesthoods available. Whether your game features as wide a range of deities as presented in the *Player's Handbook* or merely a handful of deities whose influence spreads far across the land, you can use prestige classes to further customize your campaign's faiths. If a specific god is venerated above all others in war, it stands to reason that the faithful might number a few warpriests (DF) among them. Gods of freedom would certainly welcome holy liberators (DF) into the flock, while more tyrannical deities might require church inquisitors (DF) in every city. If each prestige class is associated with a limited number of deities (perhaps as few as one), this helps makes your game feel unique.



Remember also that even though their magic shares a common type, the cleric and druid occupy very different roles in most D&D games. While society counts on the cleric as healer, diplomat, and tender of souls, the druid fulfills her place in the wild, away from civilization. Don't overlook the significance of this distinction when selecting prestige classes for your game—those appropriate to your clerics might not be suited for druids, and vice versa.

The Bloodlines campaign includes only a small number of deities. The primary human faith is that of Altius the Highfather, who provides law and order to society. The faith of Altius includes church inquisitors (DF), consecrated harriers (DF), and sacred exorcists (DF) to hunt out and eradicate evil in both the church and society at large. And even though Heironeous isn't used in the campaign, the shining blade of Heironeous (*Dragon* #283) fits in with the Altian church just fine. Most paladins follow the worship of Altius, and thus pursue similar paths.

The flip side of Altius is his outcast son, Seth, who counts blackguards (DMG) among his most powerful servants. Other prestige classes that might pay allegiance to Seth include the master of shrouds (DF) or true necromancer (DF).

Dwarves worship Moradin Soulforge, and their warlike society counts many templars (DF) and warpriests (DF) among them. The elves, who follow the druidic "Old Faith" of Erynis, use holy liberators (DF) to guard their freedom against the encroachment of human settlement and fleet runners (*Dragon* #283) as scouts and messengers. Human rangers and druids worship the same faith, and thus tend toward similar prestige classes.

One divine prestige class that didn't make the cut for the Bloodlines campaign is the hospitaler (DF). It's a fine prestige class, but since none of the faiths feature pilgrimages as a crucial element, there's no appropriate role for the class.

Skill-Users

Rogues and bards are most often associated with this category, though many other classes count skill breadth as one of their strengths. As with combat specialists, most roles filled by prestige classes in this category represent career or occupational choices, from bloodthirsty killer to happy-go-lucky outlaw to trained performer.

Specific guilds or trade organizations can provide excellent methods of including particular prestige classes. Such groups might dedicate themselves to exploration, piracy, performance arts, or simple theft. Of course, not every guild needs its own prestige class, and some classes might appear in a variety of organizations.

In the Bloodlines campaign, the hired killers known as assassins (DMG) can be found among all the races of the world. Royal heralds (*Dragon Annual* #5) serve the human government as spies, while shadowdancers (DMG) generally appear as solitary scouts or infiltration specialists. The guild thief (FR) fills the "urban rogue" role.

Miscellany

Don't forget the other cultures and monsters that populate your game! If orcs occupy a prominent role in the campaign, the blessed of Gruumsh (*Dragon* #282) provides a wonderful "elite" member of orc society. The tribal protector (S&F) fits in well with most humanoid or monstrous humanoid cultures, and if your game features dragons, try adding the dragonkith (*Dragon* #284). If you use the *Psionics Handbook,* the psionic characters in your game will cry out for prestigious paths (such as the truth seeker from *Dragon* #281), but you should also consider anti-psionic classes such as the psi-hunter (*Dragon* #281).

Checking it Twice

After you've completed your list, look for other gaps. It's likely—in fact, it's almost certain—that your campaign will include specialists who don't fit into any published prestige class. Assuming you feel comfortable with design, see if you can create one or more prestige classes unique to your world. You might conjure

these up from whole cloth, or simply tweak an existing class to fit your needs.

Inform Your Players

When you've finished your list, share it with your players. Not only does this help them plan their characters' careers, but it gives them a greater understanding of the various classes' places in your world and a better understanding of the world as a whole.

Of course, don't share everything. Maintaining a bit of mystery helps keep your players on their toes. Save a couple prestige classes to introduce at dramatic moments (such as a climactic encounter with an archvillain who displays powers that the PCs can't readily link to a known class). But make sure you justify this secrecy. Perhaps the class hails from a distant land unfamiliar to the players, such as a ninja of the crescent moon (S&tF) appearing in a European-style campaign. Alternatively, the prestige class might belong to a heretofore secret organization, such as the knight of the chalice (DF). Or maybe this is just the first character to take up the mantle of this class—after all, somebody had to be the first acolyte of the skin (T&tB). D

CAMPAIGNS WITH CLASS

Here are some example ways that your campaign's theme might influence your choices of prestige classes.

AFTER THE FALL

The great metropoli are things of the past, long since crumbled into ruin. Civilization has returned to the tribal level, as small bands of humanoids eke out a bare existence in a brutal, dark world. Prestige-class characters must rely on their wits to survive in this bleak setting. Many are loners, trusting no one but themselves.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: animal lord (MW), bane of infidels (MW), ghostwalker (S&tF), hospitaler (DF), king of the wild (MW), mindbender (T&tB), mystic wanderer (MF), outlaw of the crimson road (S&tS), temple raider of Olidammara (S&tS), tribal protector (S&tF).

BATTLEWORLD

Strength is power. Physical prowess leads to domination in this world, where only the mighty can rule. Such a world breeds prestige classes that focus on heightening expertise in battle (both personal combat and large-scale warfare).

Appropriate Prestige Classes: cavalier (S&tF), fist of Hextor (S&tF), frenzied berserker (MW), gladiator (S&tF), ravager (S&tF), red avenger (S&tF), tempest (MW), templar (DF), war wizard of Cormyr (MF), warmaster (S&tF), warpriest (DF), weapon master (S&tF).

CITYWORLD

Cityscapes dominate the land, as the ever-burgeoning population threatens to spread from sea to shining sea. Characters who focus on urban survival thrive in this setting, particularly those able to go from gritty alleys to fancy palaces at a moment's notice.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: arcane trickster (T&tB), assassin (DMG), detective-inspector (MW), devoted defender (S&tF), duelist (S&tF), divine seeker (FR), guild thief (FR), mage of the arcane order (T&tB), spymaster (S&tS), thief-acrobat (S&tS), vigilante (S&tS).

CRUSADERS

Holy warriors battle against one another in distant lands, each side laying claim to sacred territory. Prestigious characters must carve a place for themselves, either in the battles themselves or in the courts of intrigue left behind.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: forsaker (MW), hospitaler (DF), knight of the Middle Circle (DF), knight protector of the Great Kingdom (S&tF), templar (DF), warmaster (S&tF), warpriest (DF).

DEADWORLD

The clerics of Deadworld lost the battle against undead a long time ago, and now lichlords and vampire kings rule huge swathes of the planet. Zombie armies march across the land, and ghouls lurk in every shadowed alley. Prestige classes in this world must be ready to deal with the undead, either as foes, allies, masters, or servants.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: hunter of the dead (DF), master of shrouds (DF), pale master (T&tB), sacred exorcist (DF), temple raider of Olidammara (S&tS), true necromancer (T&tB).

FIENDISH INVASION

This campaign world is marked by an overabundance of fiends invading from the Lower Planes. Hordes of demons rampage across the battlefields, while crafty devils insinuate themselves into positions of power. Not only does such a world require specialized characters to deal with the threat of evil, but it fosters a greater number of prestige classes relying on the forces of evil to grant them power.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: acolyte of the skin (T&tB), blackguard (DMG), church inquisitor (DF), eldritch master (*Dragon* #280), fiend slayer (*Dragon* #287), knight of the chalice (DF), planar champion (MP), sacred exorcist (DF).

THE NEW WORLD

Whether newly discovered or newly open to settlement, a fresh region encourages exploration and colonization (not to mention economic domination). Prestige classes whose powers can take advantage of these opportunities will blossom. On the other hand, this expansion may discover strange characters who have never seen civilization.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: blighter (MW), dread pirate (S&tS), loremaster (DMG), royal explorer (S&tS), verdant lord (MW), wayfarer guide (T&tB).

UNDERDARK CAMPAIGN

Sky? What's a sky? This campaign takes place entirely underneath the surface, where darkness is a way of life and claustrophobia is a deadly illness. Characters must be able not only to cope with living underground, but to take advantage of the opportunities and limitations associated with the underdark.

Appropriate Prestige Classes: ancestral avenger (*Dragon* #279), dungeon delver (S&tS), dwarven defender (DMG), fang of Lolth (S&tS), oozemaster (MW), shadowdancer (DMG), stonelord (*Dragon* #278).

20 D20 QUESTIONS

Evaluating Prestige Classes for Use in Your Campaign

To help you decide whether to include a prestige class in your campaign, answer the twenty questions listed below in regards to the class you're considering. Tally the appropriate number of points based on each answer and consult the score chart to gauge the prestige class's appropriateness for your campaign.

ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL GROUPS

Many prestige classes present (or assume the existence of) a specific organization or social group that they belong to. Others may fit in to organizations that already exist.

1 If this prestige class presents a new organization, is it similar to one that you already have in your campaign?
☐Yes +1 and see 1a ☐No +0 and see 1b

1a If yes, does that organization already have a prestige class that fills the role presented by this prestige class?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +2

1b If no, would this new organization fit well into the theme of your campaign world?
☐Yes +1 ☐No -2

2 If this prestige class doesn't present a new organization, would it fit well into an existing organization in your campaign world?
☐Yes +1 and see 2a ☐No +0

2a If yes, does that organization already have a prestige class that fills the role presented by this prestige class?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +2

CLASS OPPORTUNITIES

Though prestige classes aim to encourage entrants from a variety of class backgrounds, most are best suited for a subset of the classes found in the *Player's Handbook*. Use the textual description of the prestige class, along with its requirements, to determine the answers to the following questions.

3 Does this prestige class encourage entrants from three or more character classes?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

4 Does this prestige class encourage entrants primarily from a single character class?
☐Yes -1 ☐No +0

5 Is this prestige class primarily aimed at a class or classes that are extremely common in your campaign?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

6 Is this prestige class primarily aimed at a class or classes that are rare or unknown in your campaign?
☐Yes -1 ☐No +0

7 Is this prestige class primarily aimed at a class or classes that already have many prestige class opportunities in your game?
☐Yes -1 ☐No +1

8 Is this prestige class primarily aimed at a class or classes that have relatively few prestige class opportunities in my game?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

RACE AND CULTURE

Many prestige classes come from a specific race or culture, which can heighten or limit its appropriateness.

9 Is this prestige class open to characters of all common races in your campaign?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

10 Does this class draw entrants wholly or primarily from a race or culture that is significant in your campaign?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

11 Does this class draw entrants wholly or primarily from a race or culture that is rare or unknown in your campaign?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +0

12 Does this prestige class present (or assume) a philosophical or religious outlook common to your campaign?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

13 Does this prestige class present (or assume) a philosophical or religious outlook inappropriate to your campaign?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +0

14 Does your campaign world feature a wide variety of cultures and social backgrounds?
☐Yes +1 ☐No +0

CAMPAIGN QUESTIONS

Finally, some questions simply rely on you, your campaign, and the players participating in it.

15 Does your campaign assume that a specialist fills the role presented by this prestige class?
☐Yes +1 and see 15a ☐No -1

15a Does another prestige class present in your campaign already fill the role presented by this prestige class?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +1

16 Does this class utilize optional rules or variants that are inappropriate for your campaign?
☐Yes -2 ☐No +017.

17 Does this class highlight or help justify optional rules or variants that you have included in your campaign?
☐Yes +2 ☐No +0

18 When you look at this prestige class, do you immediately start dreaming of the archvillain you'll create with it?
☐Yes +2 ☐No +0

19 Do you know that one or more of your players will pursue this prestige class if it is introduced in your campaign?
☐Yes +2 ☐No +0

20 Would you feel comfortable offering this prestige class to the players in your campaign?
☐Yes +1 ☐No -2

SCORE CHART

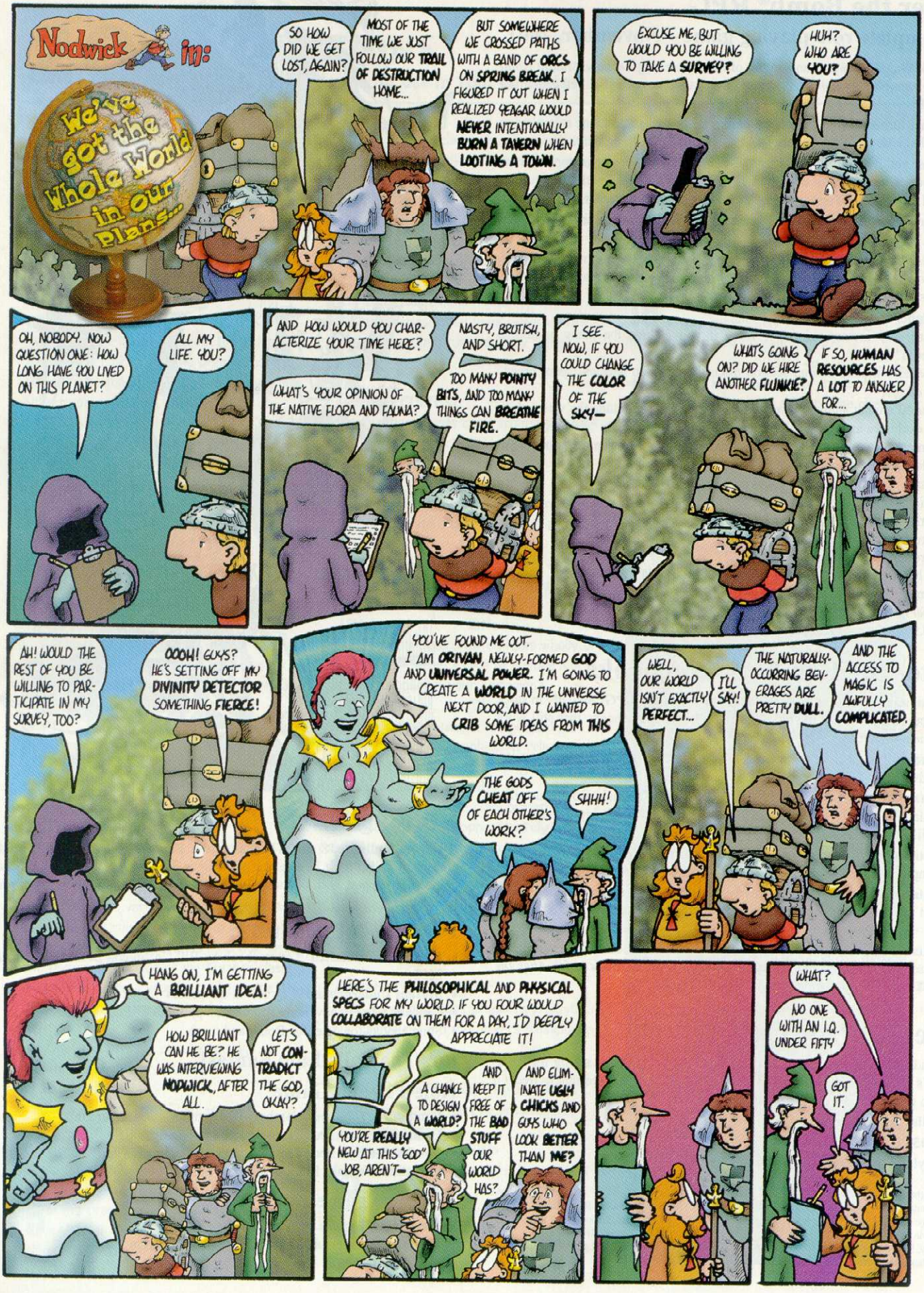
Less than 0 Strongly consider leaving this prestige class out of your campaign. Whether it doesn't fit the flavor of your game or its role is already filled, it seems to add very little to your campaign.

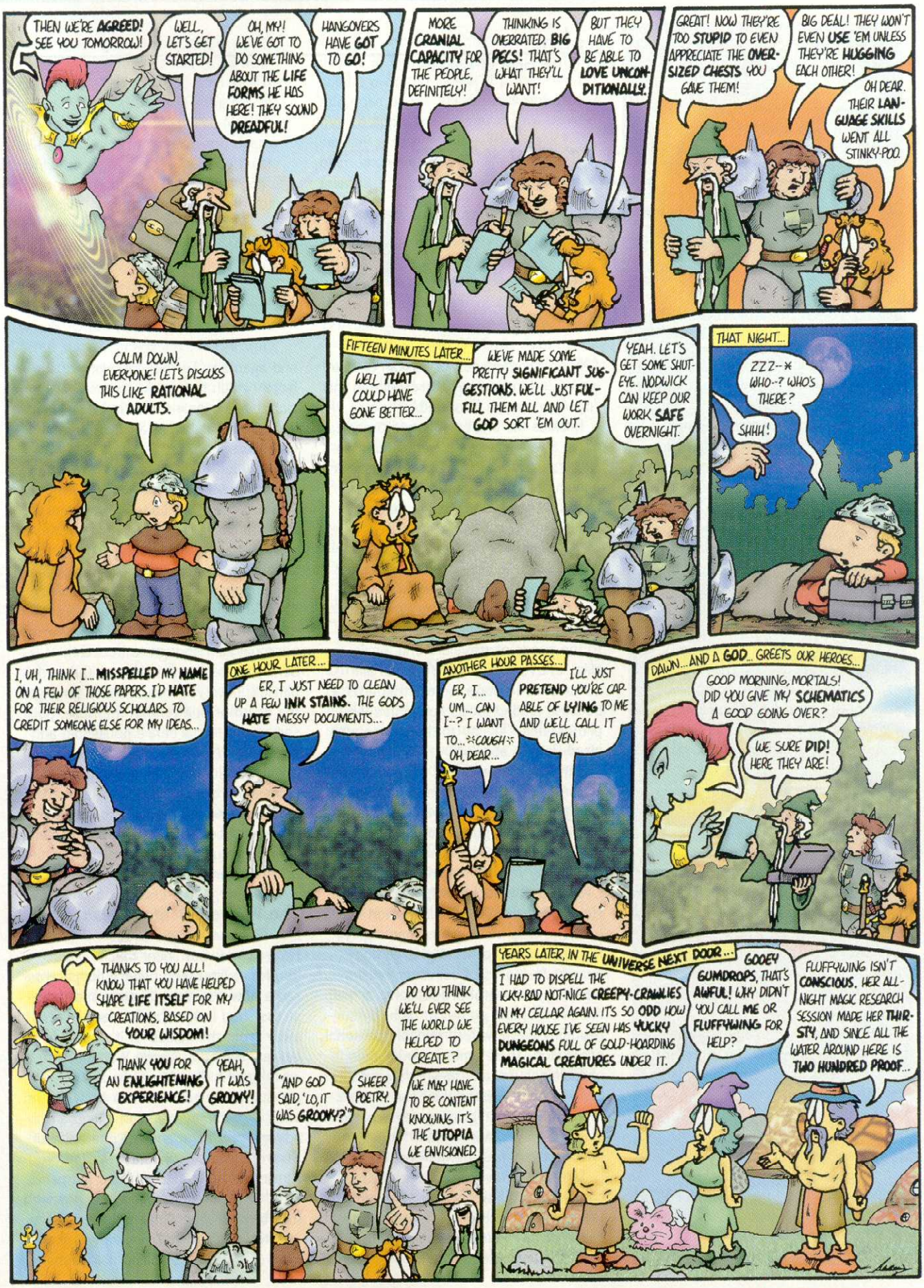
0 to 4 This prestige class will probably only fit into your campaign with significant alterations to its role in the setting, or as a unique character. Consider not offering it to your players unless their characters overcome significant social or roleplaying obstacles as chosen by you.

5 to 8 This prestige class should fit your game, though it may be either too generic or slightly ill-fitting as is. Consider adding it with minor modifications. Be sure to inform any player selecting it that you are still testing it for appropriateness and balance. You might want to try it out as an NPC before opening it up to your players.

9 to 12 This prestige class fits your campaign relatively well. Consider adding it in your game, including for player use.

13+ This prestige class sounds perfect for your game. Strongly consider adding it, and encourage players to consider it for their characters.


Nodwick in:
We've got the Whole World in our plans...
SO HOW DID WE GET LOST, AGAIN?
MOST OF THE TIME WE JUST FOLLOW OUR TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION HOME...
BUT SOMEWHERE WE CROSSED PATHS WITH A BAND OF ORCS ON SPRING BREAK. I FIGURED IT OUT WHEN I REALIZED YEAGAR WOULD NEVER INTENTIONALLY BURN A TAVERN WHEN LOOTING A TOWN.
EXCUSE ME, BUT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TAKE A SURVEY?
HUH? WHO ARE YOU?
OH, NOBODY. NOW QUESTION ONE: HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED ON THIS PLANET?
ALL MY LIFE. YOU?
AND HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE YOUR TIME HERE?
NASTY, BRUTISH, AND SHORT.
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF THE NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA?
TOO MANY POINTY BITS, AND TOO MANY THINGS CAN BREATHE FIRE.
I SEE. NOW, IF YOU COULD CHANGE THE COLOR OF THE SKY—
WHAT'S GOING ON? DID WE HIRE ANOTHER FLUNKIE?
IF SO, HUMAN RESOURCES HAS A LOT TO ANSWER FOR...
AH! WOULD THE REST OF YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN MY SURVEY, TOO?
OOOH! GUYS? HE'S SETTING OFF MY DIVINITY DETECTOR SOMETHING FIERCE!
YOU'VE FOUND ME OUT. I AM ORIVAN, NEWLY-FORMED GOD AND UNIVERSAL POWER. I'M GOING TO CREATE A WORLD IN THE UNIVERSE NEXT DOOR, AND I WANTED TO CRIB SOME IDEAS FROM THIS WORLD.
THE GODS CHEAT OFF OF EACH OTHER'S WORK?
SHHH!
WELL, OUR WORLD ISN'T EXACTLY PERFECT...
I'LL SAY!
THE NATURALLY-OCCURRING BEVERAGES ARE PRETTY DULL.
AND THE ACCESS TO MAGIC IS AWFULLY COMPLICATED.
HANG ON, I'M GETTING A BRILLIANT IDEA!
HOW BRILLIANT CAN HE BE? HE WAS INTERVIEWING NODWICK, AFTER ALL.
LET'S NOT CONTRADICT THE GOD, OKAY?
HERE'S THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND PHYSICAL SPECS FOR MY WORLD. IF YOU FOUR WOULD COLLABORATE ON THEM FOR A DAY, I'D DEEPLY APPRECIATE IT!
A CHANCE TO DESIGN A WORLD?
AND KEEP IT FREE OF THE BAD STUFF OUR WORLD HAS?
AND ELIMINATE UGLY CHICKS AND GUYS WHO LOOK BETTER THAN ME?
YOU'RE REALLY NEW AT THIS "GOD" JOB, AREN'T—
WHAT?
NO ONE WITH AN I.Q. UNDER FIFTY
GOT IT.


THEN WE'RE AGREED! SEE YOU TOMORROW!
WELL, LET'S GET STARTED!
OH, MY! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE LIFE FORMS HE HAS HERE! THEY SOUND DREADFUL!
HANGOVERS HAVE GOT TO GO!
MORE CRANIAL CAPACITY FOR THE PEOPLE, DEFINITELY!
THINKING IS OVERRATED. BIG PECS! THAT'S WHAT THEY'LL WANT!
BUT THEY HAVE TO BE ABLE TO LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY.
GREAT! NOW THEY'RE TOO STUPID TO EVEN APPRECIATE THE OVERSIZED CHESTS YOU GAVE THEM!
BIG DEAL! THEY WON'T EVEN USE 'EM UNLESS THEY'RE HUGGING EACH OTHER!
OH DEAR. THEIR LANGUAGE SKILLS WENT ALL STINKY-POO.
CALM DOWN, EVERYONE! LET'S DISCUSS THIS LIKE RATIONAL ADULTS.
FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...
WELL THAT COULD HAVE GONE BETTER...
WE'VE MADE SOME PRETTY SIGNIFICANT SUGGESTIONS. WE'LL JUST FULFILL THEM ALL AND LET GOD SORT 'EM OUT.
YEAH. LET'S GET SOME SHUTEYE. NODWICK CAN KEEP OUR WORK SAFE OVERNIGHT.
THAT NIGHT...
ZZZ--* WHO--? WHO'S THERE?
SHHH!
I, UH, THINK I... MISSPELLED MY NAME ON A FEW OF THOSE PAPERS. I'D HATE FOR THEIR RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS TO CREDIT SOMEONE ELSE FOR MY IDEAS...
ONE HOUR LATER...
ER, I JUST NEED TO CLEAN UP A FEW INK STAINS. THE GODS HATE MESSY DOCUMENTS...
ANOTHER HOUR PASSES...
ER, I... UM... CAN I--? I WANT TO... *COUGH* OH, DEAR...
I'LL JUST PRETEND YOU'RE CAPABLE OF LYING TO ME AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN.
DAWN... AND A GOD... GREETS OUR HEROES...
GOOD MORNING, MORTALS! DID YOU GIVE MY SCHEMATICS A GOOD GOING OVER?
WE SURE DID! HERE THEY ARE!
THANKS TO YOU ALL! KNOW THAT YOU HAVE HELPED SHAPE LIFE ITSELF FOR MY CREATIONS, BASED ON YOUR WISDOM!
THANK YOU FOR AN ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCE!
YEAH, IT WAS GROOVY!
"AND GOD SAID, 'LO, IT WAS GROOVY?"
SHEER POETRY.
DO YOU THINK WE'LL EVER SEE THE WORLD WE HELPED TO CREATE?
WE MAY HAVE TO BE CONTENT KNOWING IT'S THE UTOPIA WE ENVISIONED.
YEARS LATER, IN THE UNIVERSE NEXT DOOR...
I HAD TO DISPELL THE ICKY-BAD NOT-NICE CREEPY-CRAWLIES IN MY CELLAR AGAIN. IT'S SO ODD HOW EVERY HOUSE I'VE SEEN HAS YUCKY DUNGEONS FULL OF GOLD-HOARDING MAGICAL CREATURES UNDER IT.
GOOEY GUMDROPS, THAT'S AWFUL! WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL ME OR FLUFFYWING FOR HELP?
FLUFFYWING ISN'T CONSCIOUS. HER ALL-NIGHT MAGIC RESEARCH SESSION MADE HER THIRSTY, AND SINCE ALL THE WATER AROUND HERE IS TWO HUNDRED PROOF...

The Missing MINOTAUR

by Ed Greenwood · Illustrated by David Day

The Missing Minotaur of western Everlund is a newly built tavern catering to adventurers, mercenaries, treasure-hunters, explorers, and other rough folk not welcome elsewhere. Such folk eat hard, drink hard, and play hard; openly-worn weapons are the rule in the "Map House," and so are knife-throwing games and open talk of planned lawlessness and butchery.

The Minotaur acquired its "Map House" nickname thanks to the hobby of its proprietor, a weatherbeaten retired adventurer by the name of Elsk Thavarask. "Squarejaw Thavarask" is a mapmaker—not a skilled cartographer, but simply a man who loves maps—and is slowly crafting a huge, as-detailed-as-he-can-make-it map of the known North behind his bar. Folk come in to give or sell him little scraps of map (snatches of city streets in Silverymoon and Sundabar, sketches of woodland trails and traplines, and even written notes of landmarks, water sources, and ruins), and he tacks them up beside his slowly-growing master map. Sometimes he trades away or sells pieces of these maps, but none of them ever go on display until he's made two painstaking copies and hidden them elsewhere.

The Minotaur is a rough, late-night-roaring place, specializing in potent brews (Thavarask doesn't hesitate to slip "knockout" poison into flagons when patrons become too rowdy or aggressive) and in becoming useful to half a dozen upstart merchant cabals and shady organizations seeking to take advantage of the developing North.

Naturally, the Harpers are busily planting agents here to keep watch over the goings-on, and it seems the Arcane Brotherhood of Luskan is also interested in keeping a presence in this "opening eye on Everlund."

Besides the aforementioned organizations, a few local cabals and shady alliances have spies among the regular patrons of the Minotaur; interesting things said and done in the taproom will be passed on to any and all of the following:

The Black Buckler: This is a loose confederacy of mercenary warriors and rogues who help each other gain employment by paying close attention to the needs of travelers and locals alike. In Everlund, active rogues are considered to make excellent guards, because among locals active in such professions, "loyalty to the patron who hired you" is absolute.

Sarthun's Shield: This semi-retired adventuring band of some fourteen aging human men and women love to parade, do bodyguard duty, and do work not likely to be deadly or to take them away from the environs of Everlund. They often help search for runaways or stolen goods, put on uniforms to help visiting merchants give the appearance of having large bodyguards or cadres of servants, bolster wedding or funeral processions, or help the overly timid go out at night by surrounding them with formidable personal protection. Their ranks include some capable rogues, and they're always alert for news of treasure they can acquire to live on in their graying days—particularly if they can swindle it from unscrupulous passing merchants.

Tathtard's Rose: This cold-blooded cabal of merchants is spreading with the growth of the Silver Marches. Its dozen or so members employ their most trusted personal servants as spies and agents to further the work of the Rose—which is to make its members rich, by fair means and foul. Tathtard is a furniture-maker of Silverymoon and a ruthlessly brilliant man; he prefers to work within the law whenever possible and to be secretive and subtle, simply to avoid reprisals. Long ago he decided that if a small, elite group of merchants worked together to arrange goods shortages, fix prices, direct business opportunities to each other, and share inside information they should all profit handsomely—yet never see short-term personal gain enough to be worth betraying each other. Neviol Tathtard himself, however, has secretly arranged the death of one rival in the Rose, poisoning the man's entire household and sweeping in with his most trusted agents to plunder the rival's hidden coinage before anyone else discovered the disaster—and he plans to serve other members of the Rose in the same way, if circumstances ever make it profitable enough.

The Master of the House

Elsk Thavarask was born in Neverwinter but spent much of his youth in Waterdeep (where his parents ran a now-vanished laundry and seamstress shop in the Castle Ward "as far away from the Palace as it's possible to get, an' still be in Castle Ward"). At an early age he discovered he loved coins, gems, and danger, and that he was both swift and strong. He soon joined an adventuring band and fell into a life of Sword Coast piracy—staying alive by sensing when to flee or drop out of sight (as fellows who didn't tangled with foes beyond their handling and died).

After years of this, Thavarask grew tired of the cold, of pain, of always

needing to be alert for danger, and of not having time to sit and drink in a place he was welcome in for more than his coins. Harboring a lifelong fascination with the "wild, unspoiled North" and an enjoyment of boar and deer hunts, he dissolved his last and most famous adventuring band, The Men of the Mask, came to Everlund with some friends he suspects were Harpers who'd been keeping an eye on him, and opened the Minotaur—which is named for the first monster he ever slew.

Elsk is a brown-haired, green-eyed, weatherbeaten man who likes people, often senses danger before it erupts, and is slow to anger. He dislikes untended fires and folk who hurl magic about carelessly. Thavarask has a covert agreement with a local Harper; as long as he maintains one private sleeping-chamber at the Minotaur that has its own well-hidden entrance, and feeds and houses therein without charge anyone who arrives and gives the right password, he'll be paid 500 gold pieces annually.

Elsk Thavarask, Male Human Ftr8: CR 8; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 8d10+16; hp 60; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (touch 13, flat-footed 19); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5/crit 19-20, +1 longsword) or +12/+7 ranged (1d10/crit 19-20, heavy crossbow); AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +3, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +3, Ride +12, Spot +4, Swim -5. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Improved Disarm, Leadership, Mobility, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: *+2 scale mail, +1 large wooden shield, +1 longsword, boots of speed,* masterwork heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, 340 gp and 1d8 gems (worth 2,800 gp) hidden around the Minotaur.

Thavarask's Sleep Venoms

The Master of the Minotaur employs at least three rare and expensive venoms to prepare sleep-inducing drinks. He acquires these from traders who buy them covertly in Waterdeep and Skullport from pirates of the Nelanther (who in turn get them by milking poisonous fanged fish and island vipers). All of these are cloudy white liquids of faintly sweet taste and viscous consistency that can be diluted in either water or alcohol and still be effective. Typical prices are for one dose of the poison. It is not effective to apply the poison in any quality smaller than one dose. Thavarask has been known to sell poison to trusted friends, but he is insulted when other would-be purchasers approach him.

Slarkfish—*Type:* Ingested DC 14; *Initial Damage:* 1d4 Dex; *Secondary Damage:* Unconsciousness; *Price:* 100 gp.

Nightviper—*Type:* Ingested or injury DC 14; *Initial Damage:* 0; *Secondary Damage:* 3d6 Wis; *Price:* 600 gp.

Saldruth's Viper Venom—*Type:* Ingested or injury DC 16; *Initial Damage:* 2d12 hp (subdual); *Secondary Damage:* 1d6 Con; *Price:* 300 gp.

Udderfish—*Type:* Ingested DC 12; *Initial Damage:* 1d4 hp (subdual); *Secondary Damage:* 2d12 hp (subdual); *Price:* 400 gp.

Numbfish Jelly—*Type:* Ingested or contact DC 16; *Initial Damage:* 3d6 Dex; *Secondary Damage:* 1d6 Dex + 1d2 Wis; *Price:* 300 gp.

Pauper's Poison—*Type:* Ingested DC 12; *Initial Damage:* 0; *Secondary Damage:* 2d6 hp (subdual); *Price:* 40 gp.

Elminster's Notes

Not much, know ye; I'd just as soon ye not know who's a Harper and who serves the Arcane Brotherhood, and out swords or start whispering plots the moment ye sit down! But, if ye must, know this: Asking Thavarask or the tavern-maid Elanthra to meet with "Old Thammas" means ye want to talk privately with a Harper; telling them you need to see "Larlaun" means ye need the aid of several armed Harpers, in haste. Try not to look surprised at who appears.

If ye espy a slender, darkly handsome man with eyes the hue of old honey, who can't seem to stop smiling, 'tis likely ye look upon Thold Ramaeras (NE male human Rog4/Ftr7), an Arcane Brotherhood agent who trades in wines in Everlund and is forever sponsoring novice adventuring bands to explore this or that nearby tomb or ruin. Another Brotherhood agent betimes seen in the Minotaur is a slender young man with snow-white hair, Selth Dorlanneir (CE male human Ftr 3/Wiz 9), who works as a guide and caravan guard locally—when he's not out murdering people on the sly.

In Your Campaign

Adapting "Elminster's Guide to the Realms" for your campaign might seem daunting to you, but it's as easy as importing any other element from the magazine. Although the article contains many references to particular personalities and power groups in the Forgotten Realms setting, you can simply change them to suit your game.

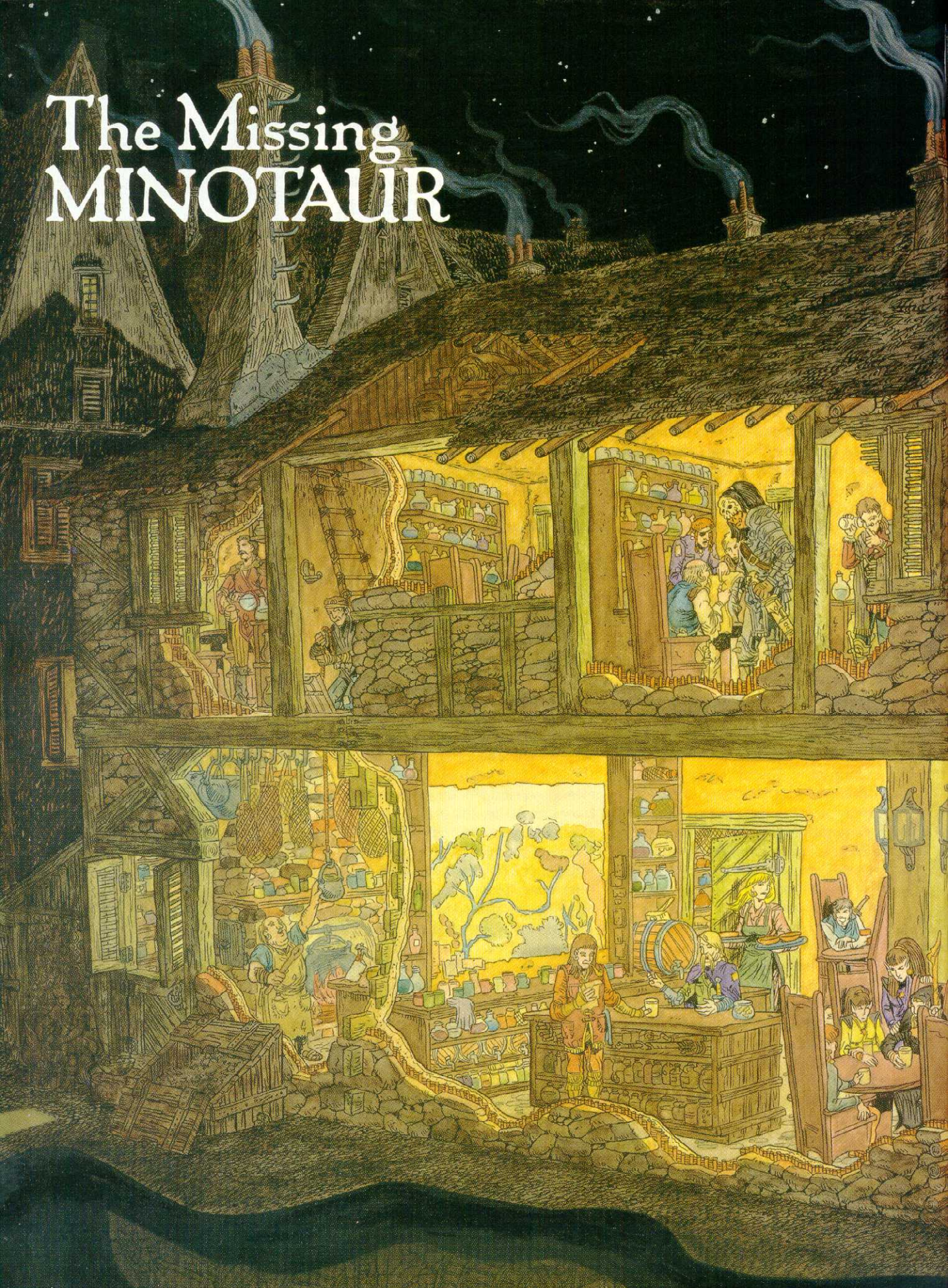
For instance, without any knowledge of the Forgotten Realms, it should be clear that the Harpers are a large and well-informed group of secretive do-gooders, and that the Arcane Brotherhood is a similarly secretive group of evil spellcasters. Just change the names, and in your campaign, the Harpers could be a group of paladins working secretly in an evil empire and the Arcane Brotherhood could be a cult of snake worshippers hoping to usurp control of the evil empire while fending off the paladins. Alternatively, maybe the power groups are rival thieves' guilds, both as evil and underhanded as they come.

Thavarask is a powerful NPC and a simple alignment change can make him a deadly villain. Perhaps the bar is run by a far friendlier (and less powerful) sort, and Thavarask exacts "protection money" from the proprietor. This evil Thavarask also forces the tavernkeeper to post false maps that lead the unwary into his traps. Or perhaps you don't want to use the Missing Minotaur at all; in that case, Thavarask makes an excellent captain of the city guard or henchman to an evil sorcerer.

The poisons can be used in any game as is or with a simple name change. Changing the poisons from ingested to injury or contact poisons shouldn't greatly affect their value, but it does increase the likelihood that player characters and NPCs will find a use for them in your game.

The map makes a great player handout when the players make the classic trip to the tavern to check on local rumors and possible employment. It's also a fine way to show players the lay of the land before they get in the almost inevitable barroom brawl.

The Missing MINOTAUR



Bestiary

Howls of Nature's Wrath

by Eric Cagle • illustrated by Derek Thompson

The skald pulled the fur cloak tighter around her body to ward off the winter chill and spread her fingers in front of the fire. A haunch of venison sizzled and blackened on a spit, filling the air with the delectable smell of cooked meat. A few members of her clan sat with her by the fire, trying to keep themselves warm. She poked the meat with a stick, and a small bit of fat hit the fire, causing it to crackle hungrily. A few seconds later, the haunting sound of a wolf's howl could be heard throughout the campsite.

"The wolves are hungry this winter," said the skald, staring deeply into the embers. "There is not much game in the woods. They might try to get into our stocks. We must be vigilant." The warriors nodded and gripped their weapons as a light snow began to fall.

The skald's eyes glazed over slightly, staring into the mesmerizing pulse of the embers in the cooking fires. She pulled the cooked venison from the flames. "We give thanks to you," she then let out a bestial noise that sounded like the cry of an elk. "We thank you for giving one of your own to feed this clan." Her voice fell to a hypnotic drone as she spoke.

"We feast upon the flesh of your children, nourishing our own and denying food to . . ." She let out a feral bark. "Your adversary." Another wolf began baying on the hillside above them, but much closer.

One of the tribesmen's children pressed closer to the skald, his eyes filled with fear and awe. "Forgive me, Wise One, but what were those sounds you made? They sounded like a stag and a wolf."

The skald's eyes focused and she shook her head to clear it. She turned to look at the young boy and smiled. "Your elders have done poorly teaching your lessons, eh, Kjeld? Those were the true names, or at least as close to them as we can pronounce, of the Horned Lord and the Wolf Lord.

"The Wolf Lord is our enemy, young Kjeld, and one of our closest friends. He is the eternal foe of the Horned Lord, father to all the deer and elk in the forest. Although we fear the wolves that lurk out there in the darkness, we also know that they are part of the natural order. The Wolf Lord created the wolves in order to hunt deer, for if the Horned Lord had his way, the deer would eat all the plants in the world.

"The two lived in balance for many, many lifetimes. But one particularly harsh winter, the Wolf Lord's hunger was insatiable. No matter how much he ate, his belly still hungered for more. Wolves hunted day and night, killing as many deer as they could find, and the Wolf Lord gorged on all of the kills. The Horned Lord could not believe what was happening. He tracked down the Wolf Lord, who sat upon a pile of bones, his stomach bloated.

The Wolf Lord is our enemy, young Kjeld, and one of our closest friends.

"The Horned Lord demanded that the Wolf Lord put a stop to his children's killing spree. The Wolf Lord just smiled, and attacked, baring bloody fangs.

"The Horned Lord turned and fled, knowing that the Wolf Lord would follow behind. He ran with blinding speed, through forest, hill, marsh, and mountain, the Wolf Lord right behind, nipping at his heels.

"As the Horned Lord ran he yelled out and called upon the spirits of nature all around him. He called to the heart of mountains, to the foaming ocean, to the stormy skies! He asked them to help stop the Wolf Lord's children, convincing the Spirits that they would all be next once the Wolf Lord finished with all the deer.

"The Spirits listened to the plea of the Horned Lord, and they agreed that what he said was true. Suddenly, throughout the whole world, the Spirits lashed out at the packs of murderous wolves. Huge waves crashed from Sea. Storm struck with deadly bolts of lightning. Whole packs were swallowed up by Lava. The wrath of the Horned Lord was terrible, but still he was not satisfied. All the wolves that had been touched by the spirits were not killed, but changed into something terrible.

"The Horned Lord was grateful for the help of the Spirits. However, they demanded a terrible price for helping him—the creatures they created would remain on the earth . . ."

The skald's voice trailed off. A dozen glowing green eyes could be seen in the darkness and snow all around them. ". . .and they would hunt whatever they could find, to fill the bellies of all the Spirits of the world," she finished.

The single howl became a mesmerizing chorus of all the beasts, as they slowly advanced on the fire. The warriors instinctively made a circle around the fire, waiting for the beasts to charge. A dozen shaggy wolves glared at them. They were surrounded by a thick fog, which suddenly engulfed the campsite.

The skald began to sing a song to prepare them to meet their death. . . .

THUNDER WOLF

Large Magical Beast (Electricity)
Hit Dice: 8d10+24 (69 hp)
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 50 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
AC: 18 (+4 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)
Attacks: Bite +10 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, thunder howl, trip
Special Qualities: Electricity immunity, scent
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +3
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +5*
Feats: Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm land
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-12)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 9-12 HD (Large); 13-24 (Huge)

Thunder wolves were created by the wrath of the Storm spirit, when whole packs were struck down by weird and twisted blasts of lightning. They are unpredictable creatures, who appear only during terrible electrical storms. Thunder wolves relish in the panic caused by lightning, rain, and thunder, hunting down spooked and frightened animals and starting forest fires with their blasts of lightning.

Thunder wolves look like regular wolves, with a dark gray pelt and eyes that glow an electric blue. Their fur constantly releases small sparks and jagged lines of electricity that become particularly violent when they run or attack. Thunder wolves move erratically, sprinting along for a while before stopping, then running in a completely different direction.

Thunder wolves remain active only as long as there is a thunderstorm or natural lightning. Once the storm subsides, they gradually fade away into the clouds, their howls mingling with the booms of thunder.

Because of their immunity to electricity, thunder wolves seek out other electrical creatures. In some lands, thunder wolves have an odd reputation as a good omen, because packs harass and sometimes kill blue dragons.

Thunder wolves speak Auran.

COMBAT

If a thunder wolf senses prey, it unleashes its thunder howl, hoping to deafen its opponent. After that, it releases a blast of lightning before closing in for melee. Because it can fly, a thunder wolf usually tries to remain out of reach before diving into melee.

A pack of thunder wolves attacks at the same time, using their howls to stun and deafen opponents before attacking en masse. A few wolves remain at a distance, attacking with their breath weapon while others close in for close combat.

Breath Weapon (Su): Line of lightning 5 feet wide, 5 feet high, and 20 feet long, every 1d4 rounds; damage 4d6, Reflex half DC 17.

Thunder Howl (Su): Once per day, a thunder wolf can let loose a howl that sounds like crashing thunder. Those within a 100-foot radius of the thunder wolf must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 14) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. Stunned opponents must make a second Fortitude saving throw (DC 14) or be deafened for 1d4 hours. For each additional wolf that howls at the same time, the range increases 50 feet. This is a sonic, mind-affecting attack; deafened creatures are not subject to it.

Trip (Ex): A thunder wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the thunder wolf.

Skills: Thunder wolves receive a +1 racial bonus to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus to Hide checks. *A thunder wolf has a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

MIST WOLF

Large Magical Beast (Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 6d10+18 (51 hp)
Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)
Speed: 50 ft.
AC: 13 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 deflection)
Attacks: Incorporeal bite +7 melee
Damage: Incorporeal bite 1d8
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Incorporeal bite
Special Qualities: Incorporeal, *obscuring mist*
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6
Abilities: Str –, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 15
Skills: Hide +7, Listen +11, Spot +12
Feats: Alertness, Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Any swamp, hills, or plains
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-12)
Challenge Rating: 5
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 7-9 HD (Large); 10-18 HD (Huge)

The first mist wolves were created when packs of wolves were swallowed up by an eerie fog. When they emerged, they were insubstantial beings that caused madness and insanity wherever they went. They are evil and sadistic creatures that enjoy causing pain, fear, and torment. Among the superstitious, it is considered a particularly ill omen to see a pack of mist wolves lurking on the edge of a forest.

Mist wolves look like regular wolves, with pelts of white and gray. They are always found in mist and fog. Their bodies sometimes seem to dissipate in the gloom, and it is difficult to tell where the fog begins and the wolf ends.

Mist wolves speak the language of wolves.

COMBAT

Mist wolves feed off the panic and horror a creature feels

before death. They prefer to attack at night, under the cover of a thick fog. They fill a large area with *obscuring mist* and circle around their prey, hoping to confuse it before attacking directly.

Incorporeal Bite (Ex): Although incorporeal, a mist wolf can bite corporeal creatures to cause damage.

Incorporeal: Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities; immune to all nonmagical attack forms; 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except for force effects, such as *magic missiles*, and attacks made with ghost touch weapons); can pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will; attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields (although deflection bonuses and force effects work normally); moves silently (cannot be heard with Listen checks unless desired).

Obscuring Mist (Sp): The mist wolf can create *obscuring mist* at will as if cast by a 9th-level sorcerer. This mist is incorporeal and cannot be blown away by wind.

SEA WOLF

Large Magical Beast (Aquatic)
Hit Dice: 4d10+12 (34 hp)
Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., swim 50 ft.
AC: 13 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks: Bite +7 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, trip
Special Qualities: Cold resistance 5, scent
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 14
Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10
Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: Any aquatic
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-12)
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 5-6 HD (Large); 7-12 HD (Huge)

Sea wolves are evil and vindictive creatures found along craggy and desolate shorelines. It is theorized that sea wolves are created when packs of wolves, hunting for scraps of food on the shore, are swallowed up by freak magical waves and storms. These packs were lured to the seashore by a mesmerizing sound that came from the water. Instead of being killed, they were transformed into sea wolves—voracious killers with an insatiable hunger for flesh.

A sea wolf looks like a regular wolf draped in a matte of rotting seaweed. It remains wet at all times, dripping seawater from its pelt regardless of how long it remains on shore. A constant stench of decaying vegetation, fish, and saltwater comes off its shaggy hide. The eyes of a sea wolf gleam like moonlight reflecting off of water.

Sea wolves despise sentient beings of all kinds, but they are most commonly found attacking sea elves and humans. Many sailors and fishermen have told stories of sea wolves baying along the seashore, trying to lure them into the ocean. On very rare occasions a pack of sea wolves come close to a seashore community, using their powers to drown individuals that dare to leave the safety of the village.

Sea wolves speak Aquan. Their howl sounds like the ocean crashing against rocks.

COMBAT

Sea wolves prefer to fight from the safety of the water, where they gain a cover bonus from hiding beneath the waves. When it senses prey, a sea wolf uses its breath weapon to send waves crashing onto the shore. Once the victim is cowering, the sea wolf pounces, trying to trip the victim and hold it underwater until it drowns.

Breath Weapon (Su): Every 1d4 rounds, a sea wolf can spew forth a wave of water and supernatural terror 5 feet wide and 5 feet high that travels 20 feet in a straight line before losing its force. Creatures in the area must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or be caught in the wave. Creatures of Small size or smaller that are caught in the wave are knocked prone.

Any creature caught in the wave must also make a Will saving throw (DC 14) or be frozen in fear (Cowering, see condition description on page 84 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). This is a mind-affecting, fear effect.

Trip (Ex): A sea wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the sea wolf.

Cold Resistance (Ex): The sea wolf ignores up to 5 points of cold damage each round.

SHARD WOLF

Large Magical Beast (Earth)
Hit Dice: 6d10+24 (57 hp)
Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.
AC: 18 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural)
Attacks: Bite +11 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+9
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Quaking howl, trample, trip
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1, scent, tremorsense
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8
Feats: Cleave, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm land and underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-12)
Challenge Rating: 5
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 7-9 HD (Large); 10-18 (Huge)

Shard wolves are wolves that were swallowed up in fissures created by the angered Spirit of Earth. They are the incarnation of the hungry earth, devouring any living being that can be found.

A shard wolf retains the same basic shape as a regular wolf, but there the similarity ends. The fur of a shard wolf is replaced with sharp, jagged bits of stone that looks like shale or flint. A shard wolf has incredibly sharp teeth and pure black eyes that reflect light like obsidian. They are ponderous, slow, and deliberate, hunting and devouring prey with a single-minded obsession. They prefer their meat to be completely pounded to a pulp and so grind it into the rock before devouring it.

Shard wolves only appear after an earthquake or significant tremor, after which they claw their way to the surface in order to hunt and kill. To summon these creatures, evil high-level druids first cast *earthquake* in areas that they know shard wolves inhabit. After the damage and chaos from the quake, shard wolves emerge from the ground and terrorize the countryside until they are destroyed.

Shard wolves particularly hate animals that live underground and attack them with great zeal. Gnomes and dwarves have particular problems dealing with rogue packs of shard wolves who burrow into their homes and attack anyone they find. Shard wolves have even been known to attack xorns, umber hulks, and other Underdark monsters.

Shard wolves speak Terran. Their howl sounds like boulders scraping together.

COMBAT

Shard wolves stalk their prey for many miles before attacking. They prefer to use their quaking howls to open a fissure in the earth for their opponents to fall into, or at least knock their prey to the ground. They then charge in to trample opponents. Because most normal attacks bounce harmlessly off their pelt, shard wolves are rather careless about attacking dangerous-looking foes.

The incredibly tough and sharp claws of a shard wolf allows it to dig through the earth as fast as it can move on the surface. If it can get a victim to fall into a fissure created by its quaking howl, the shard wolf claws through the earth to attack the victim by surprise through the rock.

Quaking Howl (Su): Once per day, a shard wolf can let out a devastating howl that produces the effect of an *earthquake* spell. This effect takes the shape of a 15-foot cone originating from the shard wolf. The area within the cone is affected as though by an *earthquake* spell.

Trip (Ex): A shard wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the shard wolf.

Trample (Ex): As a standard action during its turn each round, the shard wolf can literally run over an opponent at least one size category smaller than itself. A shard wolf can trample Small or smaller creatures for 1d8+6 points of damage. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the shard wolf can attempt a Reflex save (DC 19) to halve the damage.

MAGMA WOLF

Medium-Size Magical Beast (Fire)
Hit Dice: 4d10+12 (34 hp)
Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)
Speed: 50 ft., burrow 20 ft.
AC: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks: Bite +7 melee
Damage: Bite 1d6+4 and combustion
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Combustion
Special Qualities: Fire subtype
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities: Str 17, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +7, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +6
Feats: Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm land and underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-12)
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 5-6 HD (Medium-size); 7-12 HD (Large)

Magma wolves are evil, vicious monsters that desire only to burn living creatures to charcoal before devouring them.

Magma wolves resemble regular wolves but look as if they are composed of lava. Their black and hardened skin is cracked by bright red lines of heat. Their eyes glow with the red light of a lava vent. Their bared fangs continually ooze staggeringly hot lava, which can cause fires if they travel through flammable underbrush.

Because of their affinity to fire and burning things, magma wolves are the particular enemies of cold creatures, especially winter wolves. On the rare occasion when these two creatures meet (usually on volcanic islands in arctic conditions), they show absolutely no mercy toward each other. The landscape often shows the brunt of these combats, with plants and wildlife simultaneously burnt and frozen solid.

Magma wolves speak Ignan.

COMBAT

Magma wolves try to get into melee as quickly as possible, so their natural heat can burn their opponents. If they are in terrain that can catch fire, they try to create fires around their opponents before moving in to attack.

Combustion (Ex): Anyone a magma wolf touches must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 12) or take an additional 2d8 points of fire damage as clothes ignite or armor becomes searing hot. The damage continues for an additional 1d4+2 rounds after the magma wolf's last successful attack. Magma wolves can also ignite flammable materials with a touch.

Fire Subtype: Immune to fire damage; takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed, in which case it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

CLOUD WOLF

Medium-Size Magical Beast (Air)
Hit Dice: 6d10+18 (51 hp)
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 70 ft. (average)
AC: 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks: Bite +7 melee

Damage: Bite 1d8+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Whirlwind howl, breath weapon
Special Qualities: Scent, spell-like abilities
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +3
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +4*
Feats: Flyby attack, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (2-5)
Challenge Rating: 6
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always Chaotic Evil
Advancement: 5-6 HD (Medium-size); 7-12 HD (Large)

Cloud wolves were created by the vengeful spirit of Wind, when it picked up entire packs of wolves and carried them into the clouds. They were turned into cloud wolves, and now they prowl among the wispy trails of clouds, looking for flying prey, such as eagles, small dragons, and the occasional adventurer capable of flight.

Cloud wolves are pure white, with bright, glowing sapphire eyes. They are most often seen high in the sky "running" among the clouds in fast-moving packs. Occasionally, they come much closer to the ground, where they kick up immense windstorms. Cloud wolves prefer to remain in the air and are loath to set foot on soil. When they do, they move much slower than a normal wolf and take to the air as soon as it is possible to do so.

Cloud wolves and thunder wolves are bitter enemies and attack each other on sight. Considering that both types only appear during massive storms, conflict happens frequently. Packs of cloud and thunder wolves can sometimes be seen, snarling and biting at each other high in the black clouds above.

Cloud wolves speak Auran.

COMBAT

Cloud wolves prefer to stay in the air, blasting their opponents with their breath weapons and releasing a whirlwind howl to soften up their prey.

A group of cloud wolves often try to create a vicious wind-storm, with two or more individuals closing in on the flanks of their opponent.

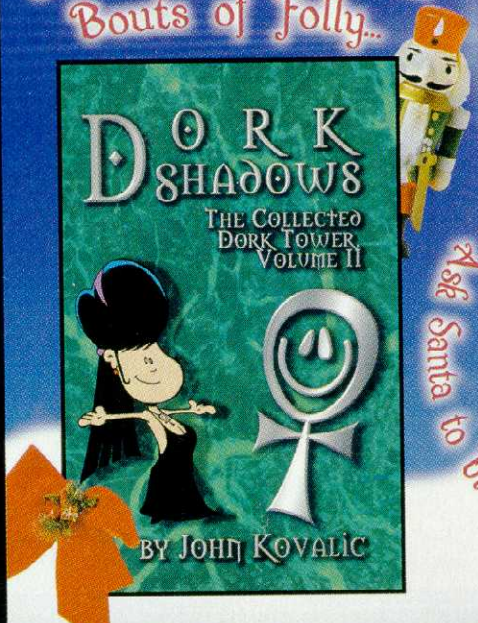
Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of air, 30 ft., every 1d4 rounds; damage 1d6, Reflex half DC 16. If a creature takes damage from the breath weapon, it must also make a Balance check (DC 16) or fall prone.

Whirlwind Howl (Su): Once per day, a cloud wolf can let out a howl that creates a tornado-like effect. This effect is similar in all ways to the spell *whirlwind,* as if cast by a 15th-level druid, except that it moves as the cloud wolf directs only for the first 4 rounds and then moves in a random, uncontrolled direction for the remainder of the duration plus 1d3 rounds. It then dissipates.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*gust of wind;* 2/day—*control winds;* 1/day—*wind wall.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 15th-level druid.

Skills: Cloud wolves receive a +2 racial bonus to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks. *A cloud wolf has a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent. D

Dork the Halls with Bouts of Folly...

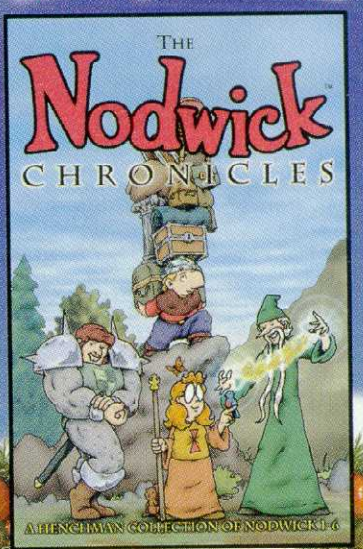


Stuff your favorite gamer's stocking with perky goths, cute clerics, clueless fanboys, and doomed hirelings!

www.dorkstorm.com

Ask Santa to bring you LOTS of Dork Storm swag this Christmas!

God Rest Ye Very Dead Henchman...



DORK SHADOWS collects every Dork Tower comic strip from issues 7 through 12 of the worldwide fan-favorite series! Relive some of [illegible]

The Nodwick Chronicles, Volume One is the definitive Henchman Collection! Encompassing issues 1 through 6 of the Nodwick comic book, it's over a hundred and

Class Acts:
The Nightsong Enforcer

by Monte Cook • illustrated by Scott Roller

The Nightsong Guild

The Nightsong Guild has worked within the city for as long as most people can remember—and probably a good deal longer. They deal in matters not entirely legal and those quite clearly illegal—gambling, smuggling, blackmail, and theft.

Their reputation is one of extreme skill and competence. They are not feared as much as they are afforded the respect that they have earned.

Most would refer to the Nightsong Guild as a thieves' guild, but it is actually a far more extensive group than that. Its membership includes rogues, fighters, bards, wizards, and sorcerers.

They do not take part in violent activities—such as extortion or murder—for the guild leadership has long maintained that if you kill or intimidate your clientele, they cease to make money (and if they don't have money, the guild can't make money). Of course, if they are attacked or threatened with violence, the guild is quite clearly capable of dealing with the situation.

Nightsong Enforcer

Throughout the city, even the vilest assassin does not command more respect than the nightsong enforcer. They could be anywhere—they could strike at any time. You cannot escape their uncanny senses. And worst of all, they often work in elite teams.

Nightsong enforcers focus on the stealth-centered combat training that rogues usually learn and forgo some of the sleight of hand or fast-talking aspects of being a thief. However, nightsong enforcers are not mere thugs. They are deadly opponents who strike from hidden positions and move silently behind their foes. When in battle, their goal is to eliminate their enemies, not to fight. Thus, they strike quickly from the shadows. They do not worry about what other warriors might—things like honor or fighting fair, and they scoff at such ideals as childish.

Rogues most often become nightsong enforcers, although bards, fighters, and urban rangers are also common. It is not uncommon for wizards or sorcerers to undertake the intensive training required to join their ranks.

When working with others, the nightsong enforcer is the linchpin. He is the very picture of fidelity when it comes to supporting teammates on a mission. It is common for an enforcer to lead a team comprised of not only other enforcers, but fighters, spellcasters, or rogues.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the nightsong enforcer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A nightsong enforcer gains no new proficiency in weapons or armor.

Sneak Attack (Ex): If a nightsong enforcer can catch an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from his attack, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the nightsong enforcer's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether she actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), the Nightsong enforcer's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by a +1d6 points every other level afterward (+2d6 at 3rd level, +3d6 at 5th level, +4d6 at 7th level, and +5d6 at 9th level). Should the nightsong enforcer score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

It takes precision and penetration to hit a vital spot, so ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 feet away or less.

With a sap or unarmed strike, the nightsong enforcer can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. He cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty, because he must make optimal use of his weapon in order to execute the sneak attack.

A nightsong enforcer can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible

anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. Also, the nightsong enforcer must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The nightsong enforcer cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If a nightsong enforcer gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Stealthy Teamwork (Su): Nightsong enforcers are trained to help each other and members of their team. At 2nd level, a nightsong enforcer always succeeds in his Spot checks to see hidden allies. This allows the nightsong enforcer to keep track of any teammates on a joint mission.

At 5th level, a nightsong enforcer can aid allies within 50 feet of himself. By taking a standard action to aid his companion, the nightsong enforcer can add a +2 competence bonus to one of the following checks: Climb, Disguise, Escape Artist, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot.

At 9th level, a nightsong enforcer's senses are honed so finely that he is aware of the location and status (fine, wounded, incapacitated, or dead) of all allies within 100 feet, even if they are not within sight.

Agility Training (Ex): At 4th level, a Nightsong enforcer can reduce the armor check penalty imposed on him by light armor by 1, provided that he is proficient with the armor type.

Crippling Strike (Ex): A 4th-level nightsong enforcer can sneak attack opponents with such precision that his blows weaken and hamper them. When the nightsong enforcer damages an opponent with a sneak attack, that opponent also takes 1 point of temporary Strength damage. At 10th level, the damage increases to 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage.

Scent (Ex): So highly trained and attuned are the senses of the nightsong enforcer that he can utilize the scent ability. This ability functions exactly like the scent ability described on page 10 of the *Monster Manual*.

Opportunist (Ex): Once per round, the nightsong enforcer can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as the nightsong enforcer's attacks of opportunity for that round. Even a nightsong enforcer with the Combat Reflexes feat can't use the opportunist ability more than once per round.

Improved Evasion (Ex): The nightsong enforcer's reflexes allow him to get out of harm's way with incredible speed. This extraordinary ability works like evasion, except that while the nightsong enforcer still takes no damage on a successful Reflex save against spells such as *fireball* or a breath weapon, he now suffers only half damage on a failed save.

Blindsight (Su): The 10th-level nightsong enforcer's senses have transcended the normal world. Using nonvisual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, scent, and acute hearing, the nightsong enforcer maneuvers and fights in darkness as well as in the light. Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant, although he still can't discern ethereal beings. The range of this ability is 30 feet. The nightsong enforcer does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight ability, unless those creatures are actively using the Hide or Move Silently skills. D

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a nightsong enforcer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Move Silently Ranks: 10.

Hide Ranks: 10.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Quick Draw.

Special: The nightsong enforcer must undergo three months of intensive training and tests with the Nightsong Guild before he can actually gain the skills offered. Further, the Guild asks all members to contribute 10% of all their earnings. In return, members have access to the Guild's extensive library, training facilities, workshops, contacts, allies and bolt-holes. Many places of business in the city offer Guild members 10% discounts on services, goods and equipment.

CLASS SKILLS

The nightsong enforcer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are as follows:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.

Dex: Balance, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Ride, Tumble.

Con: —

Int: Decipher Script, Disable Device, Profession, Read Lips, Search, Use Magical Device.

Wis: Innuendo, Intuit Direction, Listen, Spot.

Cha: Disguise, Intimidate.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

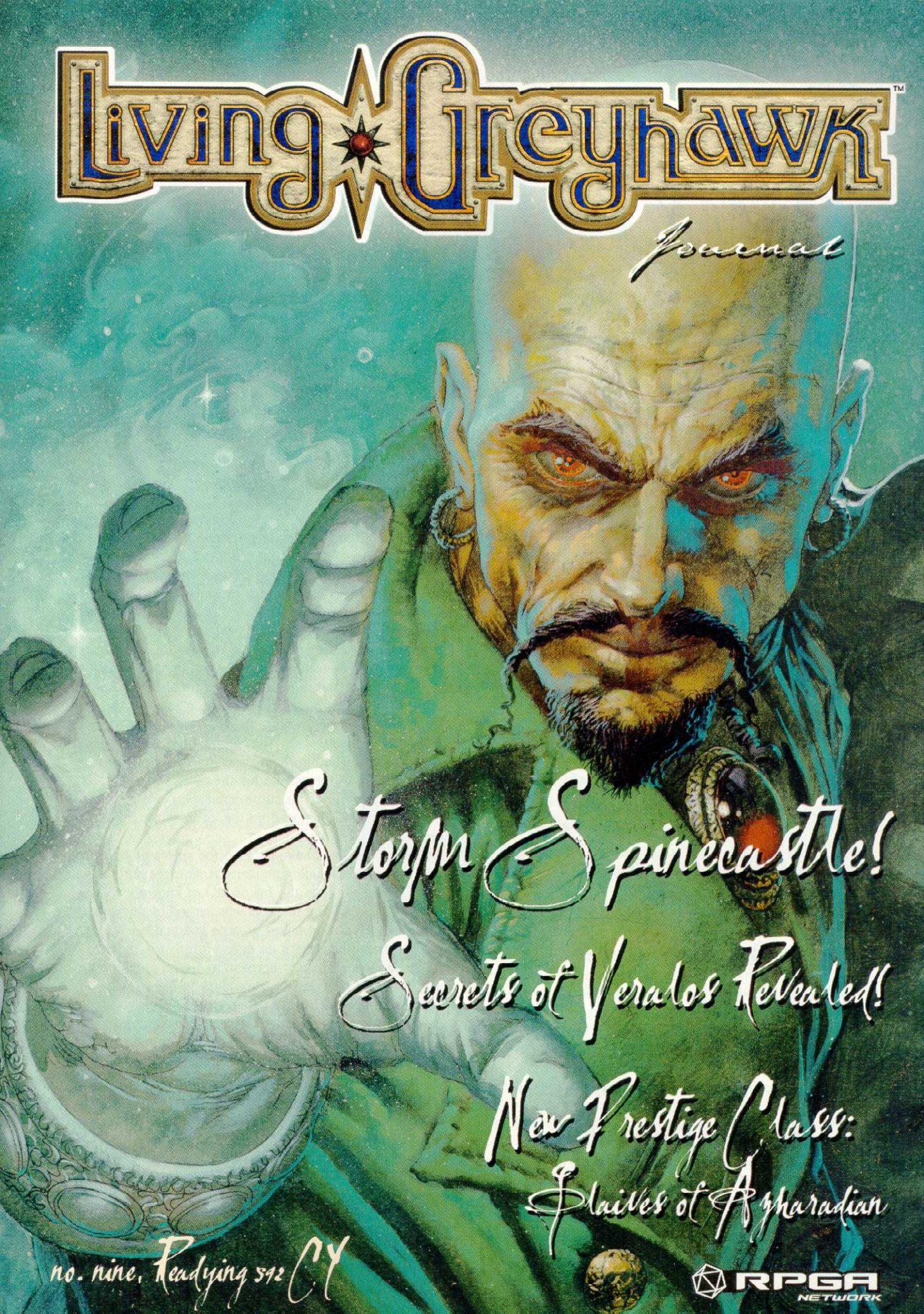
THE NIGHTSONG ENFORCER

HIT DIE: D8

Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Sneak attack +1d6
2	+1	+0	+3	+0	Stealthy teamwork (see hidden allies)
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +2d6
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	Agility training, crippling strike
5	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +3d6, stealthy teamwork (aid allies)
6	+4	+2	+5	+2	Scent, opportunist
7	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6
8	+6	+2	+6	+2	Improved evasion
9	+6	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6, stealthy teamwork (status awareness)
10	+7	+3	+7	+3	Blindsight, crippling strike (1d4)

Living Greyhawk™

Journal



Storm Spinecastle!

Secrets of Verados Revealed!

New Prestige Class: Blades of Azharadian

no. nine, Readying 592 CY

RPGA NETWORK

Places of Mystery

Spinecastle and Veralos

by Gary Holian • illustrated by Kalman Andrasofszky

The Flanaess bears no shortage of exotic locales in which adventurers can risk their lives chasing the barest rumors of treasure. Great dungeons such as those found in the Wormcrawl Fissure, the Belching Vortex of Leuk-O, or White Plume Mountain predominate the tavern talk of would-be heroes, but not all adventure locales are "gilded holes" waiting to be plundered. A few of the most notable sites in the Flanaess, from the point of view of men and women seeking dangerous thrills and rich rewards, are citadels and keeps. Foremost among such structures is the legendary Castle Greyhawk, but two other strongholds, Spinecastle and Veralos, deserve further attention.

The Ruins of Spinecastle

Once a name that represented honor and glory in victory to the Aerdi people, Spinecastle is now a place steeped in infamy. Centuries ago, the land upon which this great castle was built was the site of the largest battle in the history of the Great Kingdom, the bloody Battle of the Shamblefield (108 CY), in which thousands of northern Suel barbarians clashed with legions of imperial troops. The Aerdi eventually won the day, and the heroics of Lord Caldni Vir (later elevated to Marquis of the Bone March) are well recounted. But to protect the northern provinces of the Great Kingdom from invasion through the strategic Kalmar Pass, construction of the most vast castle the Flanaess has ever known continued unabated. The clash left thousands of Aerdi and Frost Barbarian corpses among the works of the newly built fortress. So many were these dead that their bodies were left unsanctified and often unburied—farmers plowing nearby land regularly turned up bleached bones centuries after the battle. Some even whispered that these remains found their way into the original mortar of the castle's labyrinthine walls. The blood of the Aerdi fallen hallowed the ground in the eyes of the stout marquises who would rule from Spinecastle for the next 450 years, but the Fruztii pronounced a curse upon the place. A curse which went largely ignored by the lords of the Bone March, some say to their peril.

Many misfortunes have befallen the rulers of Spinecastle over the years, including mysterious illnesses and death, but none greater than the fall of its last known lord, the Marquis Clement. The fortress was sacked by surprise in 563 CY by marauding tribes of orcs and gnolls who first emerged from the Rakers *en masse* in 561 CY. These humanoid invaders swept across the march over the next two years and put most of its leaders to the sword. Presumably, this included Clement and his family, who sheltered at the impregnable Spinecastle until the final assault by the orcs. The marquis, along with many of the surviving nobles and richest merchants of the land, held out hope for succor from Ratik or the North Province, but it never came. The city of Spinecastle fell suddenly and surprisingly to the invaders after a prolonged siege. Most rumors at the time indicated that the castle's defenses were pierced from within, that dark and hidden ways unknown even to the residents of the castle were suddenly laid open from the depths. Whispers spoke of a dark betrayal, and this tragedy only served to confirm for some the notion that Spinecastle was cursed. The invading orcs and gnolls

made quick work of the inhabitants who sheltered in the castle during the siege.

The savage humanoids, led by their vile shamans and bloodthirsty warchiefs, searched in vain for the hidden treasures of Spinecastle. Great wealth and magic from all over the march were certainly hidden in the vast castle by the besieged defenders, but the plunder and spoils expected by the invaders never materialized. The Euroz (orc) tribes searching the castle were soon struck by a series of horrors that drove them from the vast complex in unremitting fear. Members of missing patrols were sometimes found splayed and hung from the walls of the castle in a gory pastiche. Lone individuals were discovered hacked to pieces in solitary rooms of the castle, their heads and hands missing. Blood ran from the ceilings of chambers during the middle of war councils. Some claimed that walls and whole rooms even appeared and disappeared. Monsters, fierce enough to unnerve even the heartiest of Rakers inhabitants, were found rampaging the halls, attacking and killing whole patrols. The orcs quickly abandoned the castle, retreating instead to the confines of the surrounding city, which they still hold to this day, twenty-five years later. Their shamans would no longer approach the place, which they now deemed haunted, or allow others to do so. Bloody Spinecastle seemed determined to hold fast to its secrets.

DM's Notes: The vast complex at Spinecastle is built on an imposing spur of angular rock jutting from the Rakers. It guards the southern terminus of Kalmar Pass, which cuts through the mountains, forming the primary passage between the Bone March and Ratik. Spinecastle overlooks a large walled town of the same name, which is now only a shadow of its former self. The city is an armed camp inhabited mostly by orcs, brigands, and enslaved humanity totaling a few thousand souls. The vaulted castle, composed of a massive central keep and many interconnected towers, has deep dungeons dug straight into the mountains. The keep and its towers have remained uninhabited for close to three decades, though the walls look to be in good condition. They were largely untouched by the orcs during the wars, as the savage humanoids possessed few siege engines capable of harming them. The high quarter closest to the castle is lightly patrolled to prevent incursions into the castle, but the orcs are highly reluctant to follow anyone into the place should they gain access. It is widely rumored that much of the magical wealth and treasures of the Bone March still lie unclaimed within its walls. Over the years, many thieves and intrepid adventurers have pierced the armed camp of orcs surrounding the castle to brave the passages of Spinecastle. These furtive attempts to plumb the depths of the mysterious edifice have produced few successes—indeed most explorers do not return at all. On the rarest occasions, however, explorers have emerged with wondrous artifacts or sacks laden in riches. Despite the efforts of the orcs, a clandestine cottage industry has emerged, catering to the would-be treasure hunters.

The mystery surrounding the fall of Clement remains among the central issues forming the legend of the castle. The largest fortress in the Flanaess was somehow taken virtually overnight. It is almost certain that the besieged defenders of Spinecastle were betrayed from within, but how this was accomplished remains a mystery. The bodies of the marquis and his family were never found, nor was

the *Key of Spinecastle,* a talisman of gnarled bone worn by the lords of the place for centuries. The only surviving plans to the complex, once housed within the archives of the royal architecture school at Eastfair, have disappeared. No other copies survive. Many suspect that Grenell, now the self-styled Overking of North Kingdom, betrayed his Aerdi cousins to the north by divulging the secrets of the castle's defenses to the chiefs of the Euroz in the Rakers, with whom he is now tenuously allied. The orcs are thought to have gained access to the castle from below, through the Underdark, from ways even the former lords of Spinecastle did not know. But their sway was short-lived, for something in the castle drove them away, mad with fear.

No one knows what force penetrated Spinecastle's walls and now roams the fortress. A full exploration of Spinecastle would prove exceedingly difficult, as the hundreds of labyrinthine chambers that comprise the castle includes levels that descend deep into the foothills of the Rakers. The most common rumor in town is that some dark diabolical force from deep within the earth followed on the heels of the invading orcs into the castle from the Underdark and now inhabits the castle as its own private demesne. The appearance of heinous monsters within the walls of the edifice is surely explained by the existence of these passages laid open from below. However, a less-frequently told tale suggests that the blundering orcs disturbed a slumbering spirit of the Fruztii, which is wreaking its vengeance upon all who would invade the hallowed ground of the Frost Barbarian dead.

Veralos, Lost Citadel of the Flan

As the scholar Nezirdas of Rel Deven has often noted in his highly underrated (though often controversial) histories, much of the culture and heritage of the ancient Flan was wiped out or driven to the periphery of the Flanaess by the invading Oeridian and Suel tribes during the Great Migrations. These nascent conquerors pulled down ancient settlements, built new ones atop them, and in the process of settling eastern Oerik destroyed the bulk of ancient Flannish magic, art, and writings. Surely, some of these societies (such as the infamous tyrants of the Trask) were quite evil and exceedingly bellicose, leaving the invaders no choice. But this slow cultural diaspora has left modern folk with the impression that the culture of the ancient peoples of the Flanaess was quite rudimentary. Indeed, the word Flan has become synonymous with primitive, and most of what survives to the present day is myth and legend, preserved only by a proud oral tradition still practiced among certain Flannae conclaves such as the Tenhas and the northern nomads.

One persistent legend among the Flan is that of a wondrous citadel, said to have sat near the very heart of the Flanaess in ancient times, when kingdoms of the Ur-Flan spanned the length and breadth of the subcontinent. Known as Veralos, a word meaning "aerie" in the ancient tongue of the Flan, the structure was supposedly erected somewhere near the cracked and broken ridge of the Rift Canyon, in what is now referred to as the Bandit Kingdoms. According to the oral traditions, the stronghold was the retreat of princely Ur-Flan scholars, artisans, and mystics in ancient times. It was a repository of great knowledge, learning, and contemplation, drawing disciples from many neighboring kingdoms. These highly-skilled Flan were said to have created extraordinary wonders (such as magical tablets, statuary, ensorcelled jewelry, and astounding weapons) often by commission for the lords of lands such as Sulm, Itar, Ahlissa, and Nuria. The gathered lords of the citadel even paid fealty to the Wizard-Priests of the Isles of Woe, until that fell dominion sank beneath the waves early in prehistory.

Veralos was supposedly thrown down just prior to the arrival of the migrants following the Twin Cataclysms. The legends say the inhabitants of Veralos fell victim to a curse brought on by the residents themselves, when the society was consumed by a panic caused by the oncoming and inexorable eastward march of the Aerdi tribes, who were first reported on the western shores of the Nyr Dyv in 1785 FT. Rarer legends, common only in the Bright Desert, tell of the arrival of a prophet to the ancient citadel. Using their fear against them, he persuaded the residents of Veralos to turn to an enigmatic sinister force for succor. Dabbling in dark rites came naturally to the Ur-Flan, and some say that by rousing a sleeping power from the depths of the canyon they were ultimately destroyed, leaving their citadel and treasures unguarded.

Centuries later, as the Great Kingdom expanded to the west, the Aerdi took little interest in the badlands north of the Rift Canyon, favoring the fertile lands to the south where they settled the Shield Lands, connecting their vast east-west provinces of Nyrond and Ferrond. No real effort was made to locate the ruins of Veralos, as many Flannish legends had proved to be spurious or highly exaggerated. Even so, the territory surrounding the Rift Canyon stretches over 400 miles around the rim and encompasses thousands of square miles. It is characterized by a harsh badlands, which has served to protect the supposed location of the lost citadel from curious eyes for centuries. According to the legends, Veralos is not a large complex, comprising no more than one hundred buildings arranged tightly together and surrounded by a wall made from the same stone that lines the canyon. With few buildings rising more than two stories and much of the stronghold built into the canyon wall itself, there are no spires to give away its location. Little else distinguishes it from the surrounding bluffs and so, if it ever existed, it has remained hidden for centuries.

The city would have probably remained lost to the mists of prehistory were it not for the efforts of a young lord from a burgeoning city south of the Nyr Dyv called Greyhawk. In 318 CY, the eccentric Zagig Yragerne led a quixotic expedition of his companions on a quest to locate the lost Flan citadel of Veralos. He was accompanied by such young personages as Murlynd and Keoghtom, who among others formed the auspicious Company of Seven. After a much-ballyhooed sendoff, they did not return to the city until almost a year after their departure. They surprisingly claimed to have not only found Veralos, but to have plundered it,, producing a wagon laden with unusual treasures as proof of their success. Most of the wondrous material ended up in the private collections of the Seven,

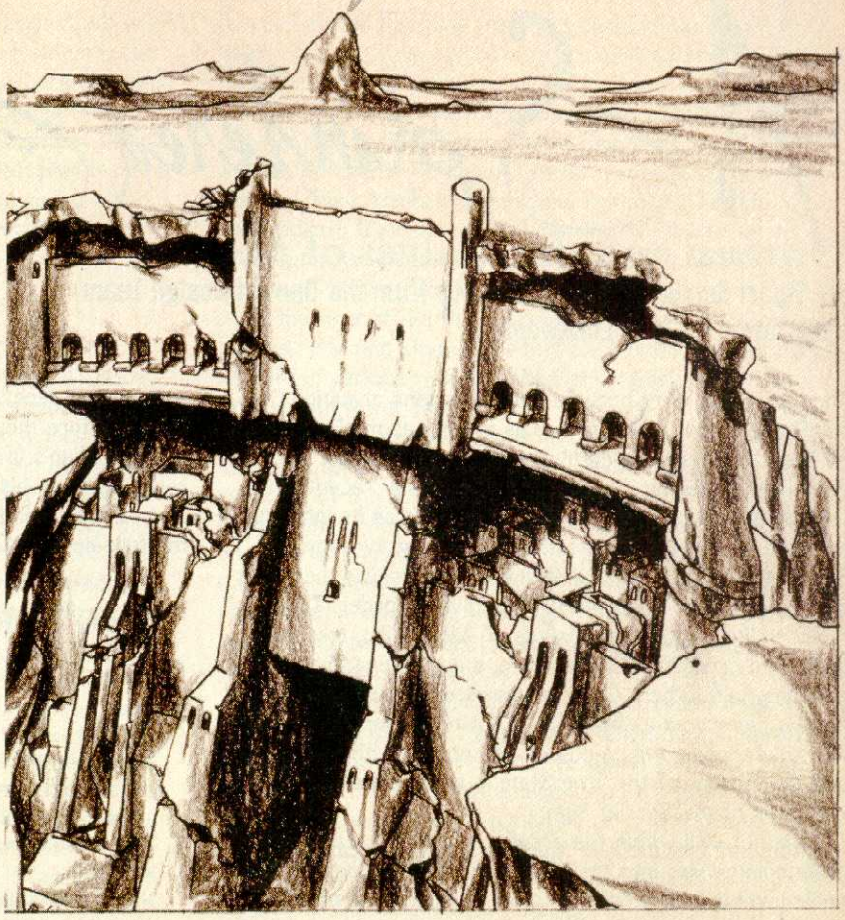
but some of it was sold off to sorcerous societies and the rest lost in future campaigns. Their expedition single-handedly revived the legend of the lost citadel of the Flan, and while many followed in the their wake to seek out the place, few succeeded. Those few who did either returned with little to show for their efforts or didn't return at all.

DM's Notes: Veralos does exist, and it is located along the northern edge of the Rift Canyon, but the land immediately surrounding the ruin is reportedly cracked and perilously dotted with sinkholes, making it difficult to approach. Mordenkainen himself has reluctantly confirmed as much on a few occasions, especially to the mage Nystul (of Flannish heritage) who took a particular interest in the place.

However, Veralos is not an uninhabited ruin waiting to be despoiled, even if its significant geographical impediments can be overcome. While Zagig reported that his expedition had been a great success, the truth of the matter was revealed by Keoghtom over a century later in a letter to the famed bard Heward. The group of explorers, who spent months tracking down the exact location of the place, only blundered upon it after taking shelter from the rapacious servants of the great dracolich Dragotha, whose lair they disturbed while seeking out the citadel. The Company of Seven were lucky to escape with their lives, for no more than half a day into their exploration of the mysterious stronghold they were attacked by pillars of dark smoke that began to form everywhere they went. These dark spirits were of a shadowy semi-corporeal form previously uncatalogued in the Flanaess. But the wily Zagig would not be driven off before risking life and limb to recover as many artifacts as he could carry. He discovered a prototype for his infamous binding cages and was able to load the partial contents of a library in which he discovered the infamous *Tome of the Black Heart.* The group sped out of Veralos, racing the sunrise for their lives with death nipping at their heels.

Keoghtom had nearly forgotten his fear of that day until a century later when a dark form materialized in his forest fastness in the Celadon and confronted him in his private sanctum. The shadow attacked him by surprise, trying seemingly to tear an amulet from his chest. The powerful alchemist soon dispatched the creature, suffering only minor harm. However, his comfort was shaken and he sat down to write a letter to his confidant, Heward. Only later did he learn that the attacker was one of shadows from the old Flan citadel he had explored so long ago.

Veralos Shadows are the evil transmogrified former inhabitants of Veralos. They are highly intelligent, powerful shadows (8 HD) with the ability to *teleport* within darkness twice per day at any range. Once roused, the spirits pursue their quarry until they've been driven out of the citadel or are dead. They are not purposefully malicious, desiring only the recovery of lost lore stolen from their citadel. On rare occasions, they are willing to go far afield to track down their pilfered treasures.



Gary Holian co-wrote the LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer *and maitains Canonfire, a* WORLD OF GREYHAWK *fansite (www.canonfire.com).*

This month's interior cover depicts Mordenkainen the Archmage as seen through the eyes of artist Greg Staples.

Campaign News Will Return!

As this issue of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal* went to press, the RPGA staff was hard at work preparing for WINTER FANTASY™, the Network's premiere convention and one of the cornerstones of organized roleplaying in the United States. There's plenty to tell you about upcoming LIVING GREYHAWK™ events and activities, so tune in next issue for a full report!

A Splintered Sun

Onnwal and the Glaives of Azharadian

By Stuart Kerrigan (with assistance from the Onnwal Design Team)
Illustration by Todd Lockwood

The Greyhawk Wars brought ruin to dozens of nations in the Flanaess, but few suffered as greatly as the Free State of Onnwal. Overpowered by the villainous Scarlet Brotherhood during that great struggle, only recently has the country regained a sense of normalcy, as its inhabitants arose to cast away the strictures of Suloise tyranny. Foremost in the battle against the occupiers was the Order of the Golden Sun, Onnwal's only chivalric order. The order's elite knights, the Glaives of Azharadian, take their name and credo from Azharadian, a great general of Aerdi antiquity said to be a Child of Johydee, a man so gifted that he never lost a single battle during his long lifetime. The knighthood forms a cult of personality within Onnwal, serving citizens of the Free State in their battles against the remnants of the Scarlet Sign.

All is not well within the order, however. A plan to integrate commoners into the ranks of what was once a purely noble institution has brought cries of concern from many corners, and claims of dark betrayals on the eve of the Brotherhood's occupation continue to haunt the organization. Whatever the future holds for the people of Onnwal, it seems clear that the Knights of Azharadian will play an important role.

To understand the present status of the Order of the Golden Sun, it is necessary to delve into the history of the man for whom the order is named—Azharadian the Great.

The Time of Azharadian

Even in an age in which his homeland has fallen to darkness and despair, the noble Azharadian is hailed as one of the finest generals in the history of the Great Kingdom. There is no greater testament to his skill than the fact that in his 40 years of campaigning he never lost a major battle. To many, Azharadian represents the greatness of the Aerdi during their halcyon days. As a man, his integrity and honor were beyond reproach. An ardent reverer of Heironeous, the general recorded his thoughts and lessons from his campaigns late in life in *The Strictures of Azharadian*, a work which forms the creed of the Order of the Golden Sun.

Azharadian's war captains had the utmost respect for him. Their accounts often mention his idiosyncrasies. At times he could seem aloof and distracted, while other times he spoke resoundingly and empathized with his men. Time and time again he was able to rally the common man to take up arms and fight for the Golden Sun of Aerdy, even when they seemed close to faltering. Azharadian was also a magnificent general, able to second-guess his opponent's moves before they themselves had made them.

Azharadian's life ended on the soil of Onnwal, far removed from his home and family in Rel Astra. Historians claim it was a disease of the lungs that claimed him, but the folktale "The General and the Reaper" is a more

THE STRICTURES OF AZHARADIAN

The Strictures of Azharadian contains both the general's personal writings on warfare, strategy, and the philosophy of war and the commentaries of his captains and distinguished glaives of the past. The *Strictures* are considered the template for the perfect glaive, and the volume is studied extensively by all members of the order. It is worth noting that while the *Strictures* themselves are succinct, several of the more scholarly knights over the years have written lengthy commentaries spanning several tomes.

A chapter dealing with "The Virtues of the Ideal Warrior" is held up as a code of conduct to which all the glaives of the order must adhere.

Compassion—*In battle and in peace, never stand idle when the innocent cry out for aid. It is your duty and your honor as one of superior lineage to protect the weak and champion that which is right.*

Honor the Brethren—*Treat your fellow knights as if they shared your family's blood. We are all brothers in battle. If one of the brethren requests sanctuary, provide it.*

Valor—*Valor is the hand that gathers the flame of selfish courage and cools it with the beliefs that we share. To demand valor of oneself is to lead the way for others to find it in their hearts.*

Humility—*Ever at our heels is one of the greatest foes of all—hubris. Though our deeds may be great and our history worthy, one must be wary of the begetter of pride and discontent. To find humility you must bear witness to the pride in your spirit. Only after such an examination can you call fourth the winds of humility.*

Justice—*Justice is an elusive quality that does not shine in the fog of war. One must always judge with a level eye and with conviction in the pursuit of truth.*

Atonement—*For those who have truly strayed too far from the path of these strictures, the only way your soul shall find salvation is through the blade of your own axe.*

romantic account of Azharadian's fight against death itself to win his final campaign in Onnwal. Upon his death, The general's body was returned to Rel Astra, where his tomb remains to this day. His war banner and axe, however, remained in Onnwal. The renowned axe *Bardinar* ("Glaive of Victory" in Old Oeridian) is said to be interred inside a large pillar raised on the site of Azhardian's death in tribute to the general, while the banner remained in the keeping of his captains.

A Rising Sun

Upon their return to Rel Astra with their general's body, Azharadian's four war captains were each given generous land grants in Onnwal; their families and retainers became the Great Houses of Onnwal. The families and comrades of the ennobled captains were to form the core not only of Onnwal's Great Noble Houses, but also of the Order of the Golden Sun, a chivalrous order dedicated to preserving the principles by which Azharadian had lived. Founded in the year 600 OR on the site of Azharadian's death at the edge of the Headlands, the order takes its name from the Golden Sun of Aerdy that formed the centerpiece of Azharadian's heraldry.

The order was never popular outside Onnwal, with the more established Knight Protectors of the Great Kingdom viewing them as a little more a fringe cult blindly devoted to a dead (albeit extremely impressive) military genius. Nevertheless, the captains of Azharadian and their descendants kept alive the traditions of their deceased paragon. From its inception, the ranks of the Glaives were restricted to those of noble blood. A second group, the Glaives Cohort, was founded to cater initially for the noble's retinues, though later it also accepted priests of Heironeous. The Cohort became the sole focus of the Invincible One's faith in Onnwal, though its doctrine of chivalry and honorable battle found little purchase among the Onnwalon peasantry.

In 447 CY, the Glaives were key players in the rebellion against the Szek, Trevellyn of Hexpools, a crony of the oppressive Naelax Herzog of South Province. It was they who marched upon the Szek's palace in Scant and seized it from Trevellyn's bodyguards, signaling the end of Aerdi rule in Onnwal. When Parmus Destron, the first ruler of a free and independent Onnwal, ascended to the throne, he did not forget the role of the Order of the Golden Sun. In return for the prestige and honors he lavished upon them, the knights swore oaths that bound their fates to that of the Szeks of Onnwal forevermore.

A Splintered Sun

During the Greyhawk Wars, the order fought with distinction on the plains of Idee. Just prior to the fall of Onnwal in 584 CY, the Glaives were summoned to a conclave in the chapterhouse of the Order in Scant's Bastion of the Golden Sun. On the eve of the meeting, however, Scarlet Brotherhood assassins struck at Onnwal's leaders, including Glaive Superior Jian Relaster, master of the order. Those knights gathered at the Bastion of the Golden Sun found themselves assailed by advance parties of Brotherhood forces bent on disabling the city's seaward defences. By dawn the surviving members of the Glaives and the Cohort had been trapped in the temple of Heironeous inside the Bastion. They could only look in despair as the red-sailed ships of the Scarlet Sign passed unaccosted beneath Scant's defences and began to land troops in the Inner Harbor. They fought grimly to the last man. The fate of Azharadian's Banner, upon which all new glaives swore their oaths, is unknown, but it is feared that it was destroyed by the Brotherhood.

By the time of the Brewfest Rebellion in 586 CY, only six glaives remained alive, all having been outside Scant during its fall for various reasons. The Cohort suffered similar losses, with fewer than a dozen surviving. The Golden Sun entered a dark period, splintered by suspicion and mistrust. The most senior surviving glaive, Gellen Cadwale, Duke-apparent of the Azure Coast, should be the undisputed head of the order. However, Cadwale was the one who bore the writ recalling the glaives to their doom in Scant. Cadwale is deeply concerned that the order is on the verge of extinction, and he has proposed that the conditions for membership be extended to accept commoners in an effort to bolster their numbers.

Halrend Lorendrenn, Baron of Dunheern and a decorated hero of the Greyhawk Wars, openly denounces Cadwale as a traitor to the order and the Free State. The surviving members of the order have become polarized between the two leaders, with Glaive Virtuous Tiren Farness and Glaive Valorous Baernen Keldas backing the duke and the younger Glaive Martials Milos Faskel and Dorlan Maldrenn backing Baron Halrend. Each knight has questioned the other's reason for being outside the city at the time, and there is a conviction that one among the two front-runners must be a traitor. This corrosive mistrust has split the surviving knights into two camps and has prevented the election of a new Glaive Superior.

The Glaive Cohort

The Glaive Cohort consists of priests of the Invincible One, men-at-arms from the households of the noble glaives and those aspiring to the ranks of the glaives. Most members of the Cohort have earned their places through their deeds. Cohorts act to support the knighthood, in battle as well as in spiritual and moral matters. Most possess riding skill and keep a strong horse. Armor serves as an important point of pride to members of the Cohort, who often bedeck themselves in elaborate chain or full plate. The Cohort greatly values members with martial skill, particularly those with affinity for the battleaxe and lance.

Glaive Errant of the Cohort

Supplicants to the Glaives of Azharadian make up a large part of the Glaive Cohort, chosen to undertake the training and trials to officially enter the greater knighthood. Such squires are called Glaives Errant of the Cohort, and have until recently consisted only of members of the nobility. Each glaive errant typically serves one of the knights as a squire. In exchange for being bound to a full glaive by an oath of fealty, the glaive errant is taught the ways of the order by the his mentor.

Given that this protocol was until recently primarily used for exchanging young and promising noblemen in an attempt to broaden their horizons and enrich bonds between Onnwal's noble families, service in the Glaive Errant has resulted in many life-long friendships between former squires and their sponsors, resulting in stronger ties between the nobility. Few can predict how the inclusion of commoners will affect this old tradition.

Candidates for the order are considered members of the Glaives Cohort from the time they are proposed to the time they are dubbed. They can therefore wear the symbol of the Cohort and must conform to the standards of behavior that govern the activity of all members of the order.

Pillars of the Order

Three Glaives of Azharadian

The following NPCs might very well shape the future of the order, and each plays an important role in the politics of modern Onnwal.

Duke-Apparent Gellen Cadwale (Pal 6/Gla 8), Glaive Virtuous

(AL LG; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 18)
Of medium build and standing just under six feet tall, Gellen Cadwale appears to have aged beyond his 42 years. Subtly whitening steely gray hair rests atop what seems to be a constantly furrowed brow. Always a serious man, Gellen's eyes of late seem to stare warily into the distance. To the outward observer, Gellen bears the mark of one who carries the fate of the world upon his weary shoulders.

Gellen bore the recall order that many consider the coincidental death knell of the order. Accordingly, many question his loyalty to the knighthood and to Onnwal itself, seeing secret schemes in the timing of his order. Gellen's detractors claim that the occupation of Onnwal is the best thing that ever happened to him. The view has some merit—Gellen emerged from the occupation as the senior-most surviving Glaive of Azharadian, and with the death of his brother, Duke Ansend, he gained the ducal coronet of the Azure Coast.

Gellen appears deeply concerned that the order stands on the brink of extinction, a conviction that propelled him to suggest extending membership in the order to commoners, an extremely unpopular proposal in some quarters.

Despite his controversial position and rumors of dangerous self-aggrandizement, Gellen has managed to garner the support of two other senior knights, Glaive Virtuous Tiren Farness and Glaive Valorous Baernen Kelldas.

Halrend Lorenndren (Pal 6/Gla 5), Glaive Valorous

(AL LG; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 17)
A tall, striking man of strong build and prominent Oeridian features, Halrend Lorenndren has the bearing and posture of a professional soldier, an occupation for which House Lorendrenn has a strong tradition. Indeed, the family crest bears a golden lightning bolt, symbolizing its dedication to the ideals of Heironeous and Azharadian. Halrend fought with distinction in Idee during the Greyhawk Wars. It was only because he and his banner were cut off from Irongate while raiding into the South Province that he was not present at the slaughter in Scant.

Lorenndren is convinced that Gellen is a traitor to the order and refuses to acknowledge his claim to the position of Glaive Superior. Privately, he agrees that the order needs new blood, but he opposes Gellen's proposals to extend membership to commoners on the grounds that it is a ploy to recruit more supporters and thus gain the leadership of the order (a position which he, of course, covets for himself). The Glaives Martial Dorlan Maldrenn and Milos Faskel, as well as the majority of the surviving Glaives Cohort, support him.

Milos Faskel (Ftr 6/Gla 1), Glaive Martial

(AL LG; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16)
A young man of 25 years, the dashing Milos Faskel strikes a fetching pose with his curly blond hair and athletic build. The youngest among the knights who survived the slaughter in Scant, Milos makes up for any lack in battle-tactics and experience with an overabundance of enthusiasm and energy.

The son of Lord Kalderon, Baron of the High Headland, Milos is no stranger to tragedy—his family has seen plenty of it since the advent of the Greyhawk Wars. His father came to power after Milos' uncle, the former baron, was lured to Scant and slain by the Brotherhood. The family holdings at Notil were seized by the Brotherhood's savage humanoid army, forcing his entire family into hiding. During the occupation, the house joined forces with House Keldas in an attempt to thwart the plans of the Brotherhood while evading capture. Rumors circulate that the alliance may have been more than temporary—according to several within the Order of the Golden Sun, Milos is soon to wed Lady Natalia Keldas in a union that will bring the two powerful houses even closer.

New Prestige Class

The Glaive of Azharadian

The knights of Onnwal's Order of the Golden Sun are known as the Glaives of Azharadian, taking their name from that of one of the greatest generals in the history of the Aerdi people. The knighthood consists of three ranks, ascending in importance and influence from the general Glaives Martial to the journeymen Glaives Valorous and ultimately to the Glaives Virtuous, who comprise the most puissant warriors in the order. The foremost Glaive of Azharadian (typically a scion of one of Onnwal's four Great Noble Houses) is known as the Glaive Superior.

The knighthood follows the tenets of Heironeous, so most members take up an active opposition of evil through honorable combat and good works throughout Onnwal. Ever since the nation fell under the thumb of the Scarlet Brotherhood during the Greyhawk Wars, the Glaives of Azharadian have worked to free their homeland from the clutches of tyranny.

Prospective knights must be sponsored by a glaive in good standing and seconded by any member of the Order of the Golden Sun (who need not be a knight). A candidate can be granted the title of knight only by the Glaive Superior at a conclave of no fewer than four other knights or priests of

Heironeous, preferably members of the Glaives Cohort (see above). At the ceremony, the candidate must swear an oath of allegiance to the Order of the Golden sun, to the Free State of Onnwal, and to the nation's rightful and just ruler, Szek Jian Destron. A second oath is sworn to Heironeous to uphold honor, justice, and the ideals and traditions of the order as outlined in the Strictures of Azharadian. Before Onnwal's occupation, such ceremonies were commonly held under the Sacred Banner of the Golden Sun, once flown by Azharadian himself. Since the fall of Scant and the presumed destruction of the banner, the knighthood has taken to using a convincing replica for this purpose.

Glaives of Azharadian are expected to at least wear chainmail in the field, and since until recently all members of the knighthood were nobles, full plate predominates. Skill with a battleaxe or longsword is required, to honor the Archpaladin, and familiarity with the lance is greatly appreciated (axe-users greatly outnumber sword-wielders in the knighthood, in part because Azharadian himself used a battleaxe). All candidates to the order must know how to ride a horse. Full knights bear shields emblazoned with the arms of the Order of the Golden Sun—the flaming Aerdi sun surmounted by a silver hand gripping a lightning bolt with the slogan "Unvanquished even in death" written in Old Oeridian beneath the image.

Not surprisingly, paladins dominate the order (they may multiclass freely as a Glaive of Azharadian). Fighters, who have the greatest potential for mastering the axe, and particularly powerful clerics of the Invincible One round out the order. Members of other classes, though uncommon, occasionally become Glaives of Azharadian.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

To qualify to become a glaive of Azharadian, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Language: Old Oeridian.

Handle Animal: 3 ranks.

Knowledge (religion): 3 ranks.

Ride: 6 ranks.

Feats: Leadership, Weapon Focus (battleaxe or longsword).

Alignment: Lawful neutral or lawful good.

Other: Must worship Heironeous. Also, would-be glaives must have done a great deed in the eyes of the Order of the Golden Sun (usually some exceptional service to the Free State of Onnwal), garnering the sponsorship of two members of the order. They also must pass the first trial of membership, known as the Trial Martial (see sidebar).

Class Skills

The glaive of Azharadian's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Wis), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Ride (Dex), and Jump (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Martial Axe
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Unvanquished Even In Death (+2 Con)
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	*Bolt of Glory*
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Presence of Azharadian
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Valorous Axe
6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Unvanquished Even In Death (+4 Con)
7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Wisdom of Azharadian
8	+8	+6	+2	+6	Virtuous Axe
9	+9	+6	+3	+6	Unvanquished Even In Death (+6 Con)
10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Sight of Azharadian

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Glaives of Azharadian are proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armor, and with shields.

Martial Axe (Ex): Glaives of Azharadian receive a +1 morale bonus to attacks made with battleaxes or longswords, provided the glaive has the Weapon Focus feat related to that weapon.

Unvanquished Even in Death (Su): Through inner strength and faith in Heironeous, glaives of Azharadian can draw upon a reservoir of power in the most dire situations. Once per day, when the glaive's hit point total is brought between 0 and -9, the glaive's body becomes charged with vigor, granting him a burst of reserve energy (glaives brought to -10 or fewer hit points die instantly). At 2nd level, this manifests as a +2 enhancement bonus to Constitution. At 6th level, the bonus increases to +4, and at 9th level, the bonus increases to +6. The Constitution bonus lasts a number of rounds equal to the glaive of Azharadian's class level. This ability does not function if the wound that brings the glaive between 0 and -9 hit points is self-inflicted or inflicted by an ally.

Bolt of Glory (Sp): By yelling an oath to the Archpaladin, a glaive wielding a battleaxe or longsword can cast the spell *searing light* as though cast by a cleric equal to the glaive's character level. A glaive can use this ability once per day.

Presence of Azharadian (Su): The mere presence of the glaive is enough to bolster the courage of his allies and keep their minds focused on the task at hand. Any ally within 60 feet gains a +2 morale bonus to saving throws against fear or charm effects.

Valorous Axe (Su): Once per day, when employing a battleaxe or longsword in combat, the glaive can treat the weapon as if it has the *keen* weapon quality. The glaive can do this for a number of rounds equal to the glaive of Azharadian's class level. If the weapon is already *keen*, this power has no effect.

Wisdom of Azharadian (Ex): The glaive embodies Azharadian's natural talent for the martial life and thus selects a number of glaive of Azharadian class skills equal to 3 + his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check with one of these skills, the glaive can take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him from doing so.

Virtuous Axe (Su): Once per day, when employing a battleaxe or longsword in combat, the glaive can treat the

weapon as if it has the *holy* weapon quality. The glaive can do this for a number of rounds equal to the glaive of Azharadian's class level. If the weapon is already *holy*, this power has no effect.

Sight of Azharadian (Ex): The supreme embodiment of the virtues of Azharadian, the glaive also embodies Azharadian's intuitive knowledge of his enemies. Therefore the glaive is never surprised and thus can always take a partial action during a surprise round (unless otherwise prevented from doing so).

Code of Conduct: Should a glaive ever willingly betray the tenets of his order, he immediately loses all glaive of Azharadian special class abilities. To regain those abilities, the glaive must renew his oaths with the leaders of the order; they must be aware of all the circumstances of the betrayal and willing to allow the glaive to return to the fold.

Ranks Within the Order

The Glaives of Azharadian can be divided into three specific branches, each technically subservient to those above it. When a candidate becomes a glaive, he is counted among the ranks of the Glaives Martial, which generally consists of knights of levels 1-4. More experienced knights often are elevated into the ranks of the Glaives Valorous. Around the time a knight achieves 7th level in the glaive of Azharadian prestige class, he is invited to test for the most honored rank within the knighthood, that of the Glaives Virtuous.

Each rank enjoys its own characteristic rituals and observances, and prospective knights must apply for and successfully test into each of the branches. Such tests generally take place at knightly conclaves. At the end of such meetings, those who have successfully tested are elevated to their new rank. The specifics of each branch's test follows:

The Trial Martial: Over the years, the order's entrance trials have become increasingly ritualized. The Order of the Golden Sun holds a trial by combat annually at the Pavilion of the Order (near Azharadian's Pillar). There, candidates who have garnered a sponsorship from a serving glaive in good standing that is seconded by any member of the order endure a battle against an active Glaive Martial attending the conclave. While the candidate humbles himself in obeisance to Heironeous, the glaive dons ornamental black full plate and ceremonial robes, clothing his horse in onyx barding. The supplicant is not told the identity of his helmed opponent, who is meant to represent the Ebon Knight, Azharadian's final opponent and a nearly mythical figure who is said to usher the greatest Oeridian heroes into the afterlife.

The supplicant and the Ebon Knight fight a duel from horseback with axes or longswords until one or the other asks for quarter. Such combats occasionally escalate to battles on foot, and throughout the history of the order,. several obstinate knights or would-be glaives have been killed rather than dishonor themselves in surrender. While the hierarchy of the order frowns upon such lethality, the spirits of those who have fallen in the Trial Martial loom large over the proceedings, and all take the combats extremely seriously.

If the supplicant proves victorious, he is said to have died and been reborn as a Glaive Martial, "unvanquished even in death." (Defeating the Ebon Knight is one of several requirements for choosing the glaive of Azharadian prestige class.) Only after he has been defeated is the identity of the mysterious Ebon Knight revealed, an event usually greeted with congratulations or commiserations from the "vanquished" foe.

The Trial Valorous: Few know the details of this intensely secret trial, in which a prospective journeyman knight is subjected not to a test of his martial ability, but of the mettle of his spirit and soul. Candidates fast and meditate within the shadow of Azharadian's Pillar, reportedly struggling with a vision of their own inner turmoil and the darkest aspects of their soul. Those who manage to overcome their personal weaknesses without being defeated by them are elevated to the ranks of the Glaive Valorous, but the specifics of how the contest is judged remain occluded to all who have not undergone the ordeal.

The Trial Virtuous: Like the trial that precedes it, the test to enter the Glaives Virtuous involves a meditative spiritual journey into the darkness of the knight's own heart. The trial begins when the knight is ushered to a secret cave beneath the Pillar of Azharadian. There, spirits from the serried ranks of Azharadian's fallen allies assail the knight in visions, testing his compassion, honor, valor, humility, and sense of justice. It is said that the final test is given by the spirit of Azharadian himself, in the company of Heironeous—Glaives who ultimately prove unworthy often quit the test in shame, their minds wholly broken by the terrible ordeal. Those who succeed, however, join the highest echelons of the Glaives of Azharadian and can claim the title Glaive Virtuous.

by Chris Pramas

The Free States

In previous installments of this column (issue #285-292) we discussed the history of the different factions of the Sundered Empire, the setting for *Dungeons & Dragons Chainmail*. If you read those articles, then you already know that the elven Empire of Ravilla suffered a series of disastrous setbacks: First the elves were invaded by barbaric nomads, then they fought a long and costly war with the dwarves, and finally, they lost a chunk of territory to their ancient foes, the gnolls. The Elven Peace was shattered, and Ravilla slipped into decline.

A Buffer Zone

The Oligarchs of Ravilla were keenly aware of their increasingly precarious hold over the empire. To free up resources and reduce their borders, they created a human puppet state named Govis in 852. Govis was populated by the descendants of human tribes that the elves had conquered hundreds of years ago, but it also included smaller enclaves of gnomes and halflings. Situated in the western territories of Ravilla, Govis provided a buffer between the empire and Thalos.

Govis thrived for nearly a century. Since all of its leaders had an elven education, it was no surprise that Govis mirrored Ravilla in many ways. Their Council of Seven was very similar to Ravilla's Oligarchs, and their military trained and fought in the elven style and used classic Ravillan tactical treatises. They only lacked felldrakes to complete the package.

If the Oligarchs hoped that Thalos would avoid attacking Govis because of its predominantly human population, they thought wrong. In 944, Queen Almira XIX ordered the invasion of Govis. Led by Godfrey, a mighty paladin of Stratis, the armies of Thalos attacked Govis to "liberate it from the elven yoke." The Council of Seven immediately realized that their military was outclassed, and they appealed for elven aid. The Oligarchs debated the matter hotly but ultimately decided they could not afford to weaken their position by deploying precious troops. In less than a year, Govis was conquered.

At last, Thalos had a foothold on a continent, a fact it would later exploit in the Godwar. For the time being, however, Thalos's armies advanced no further. The period of 950-1005 was characterized by constant border skirmishes between all the nations of the Sundered Empire. These clashes are now generally referred to as the Petty Wars. Little of consequence came out of the Petty Wars, but they kept tensions high and made war a fact of daily life.

After years of fighting and no gain, Ravilla decided to cut its losses and retreat. The original city-states had remained exclusively elven, despite the diverse nature of the empire. In an unprecedented maneuver, the Oligarchs decided to pull back to the city-states, leaving behind the humans, gnomes, and other races that lived within the empire. Many of these areas were overrun in short order by rampaging humanoids, creating a lawless buffer zone between Ravilla and its nearest enemies.

The First Free States

Those left behind quickly realized that they had to band together if they wanted to survive. Adventurers also flocked to the region, because it was easy to make a name for oneself there. The interaction between the original residents, the adventurers, and the humanoids created a group of small political entities known as the Free States. The names and borders of these states change frequently, since many of them are only held together by the charisma of one powerful leader. When a leader such as this dies in battle or falls prey to an assassin, the work of years can be undone in an instant.

The area of the Free States was initially quite large, and several warlords tried to set up kingdoms to rival Thalos. All of them failed. Once the Godwar started, things got even worse for the people of the Free States. Thalos mounted a sea-borne invasion, while troops also poured out of Govis. From the south came Drazen's Horde, tearing into the underbelly of the Free States with unbridled savagery. Ironically, it was only when the forces of Thalos and Drazen's Horde met that borders solidified to any degree.

Now the Free States are trying to survive, while titans clash around them. Many who live in the Free States have become mercenaries in the Godwar, hoping to profit in some small way from the carnage around them.

Some of the more stable Free States include:

Ironfist: This state was founded by a particularly clever ogre mage named Gallo, who realized that he could make more money protecting humans than killing them. Originally, he was the captain of a mercenary band, but he tired of cheap nobles trying to cheat him and his boys out of their pay. Gallo and his mercenaries drifted into the Free States looking for an opportunity. They found it in a town called Garrison.

A largely human settlement, Garrison had suffered since the elves withdrew. Gallo offered to protect the town in return for food and pay, and the humans readily agreed. The experiment was a rousing success, leading other neighboring towns to also ask for the ogres' protection. Gallo recruited more ogre warriors and spread his influence year by year. Within a decade, he found himself running an area the size of a small kingdom. It was only a matter of formalization at this point, so

Gallo christened the land Ironfist and has ruled as its Lord General ever since.

Fivestar: A successful adventuring band started this Free State, using the money they'd plundered in dungeons to fund the construction of a castle on an old elven site. People were attracted by the reputation of the adventurers and the safety the castle offered. The five heroes—a human, a dwarf, an elf, a half-orc, and a gnome—formed a council that rules by consensus. They have succeeded in expanding Fivestar and now control seven castles and forts in the surrounding area.

The biggest threat to Fivestar is Drazen's Horde. The Free State has repulsed several small attacks, but if a major army ever moves through their territory, it could be all over for these former adventurers. They maintain good relations with several Thalish captains and have offered their help to Almira's forces on several occasions. They hope that Thalos will return the favor if Drazen's eye ever falls on Fivestar.

Cult of the Return: A strange cult has taken over a string of monasteries in the southern mountains. The so-called Cult of the Return does not believe that the God of War is really dead. How could mortals slay a god after all? Rather, they believe that the god is testing the young races. Those who dedicate themselves to the teachings of the god will become the elite of the new order when the god returns, while the rest of the young races will be washed away in a tide of blood.

The cult members are not clerics and do not pray for spells in the traditional way. Instead, they are dedicated to physical and mental perfection, studying martial arts and their own philosophy. To prove their worth, these warrior monks sally forth from their monasteries to fight humanoids and other threats to the Free States. Despite the cult's strange teachings, their help is usually gladly accepted. D

Ogre Mercenary

Male Ogre, 1st-level Fighter

Strength	25 (+7)	Fort. Save	+9	Armor Class	17
Dexterity	12 (+1)	Ref. Save	+2	Flat-footed AC	16
Constitution	17 (+3)	Will Save	+0		
Touch AC	10				
Intelligence	6 (-2)	Alignment	CE		
Wisdom	8 (-1)	Speed	40		
Charisma	8 (-1)	Size	L		

Hit Dice 4d8+12, 1d10+3 (42 hp)
Melee Attack +11
Damage 2d8+10/x3

Special: Proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all armor, and shields; Darkvision 60 ft.
Skills: Climb +9, Listen +1, Spot +1.
Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).
Languages: Giant.
Possessions: Huge greataxe, leather armor.

WIZARDS WORKSHOP

CHAINMAIL 100
The rise of the Free States, and the mercenary groups that keep them safe— for now.

COMMAND POINTS 102
Learn shocking new tactics for your CHAINMAIL *game!*

SAGE ADVICE 104
Traveling to Rokugan? Let the Sage be your guide.

DM'S TOOLBOX 110
Take your players surfing on the World Wide Web.

by Rob Heinsoo

Spread Out & Conquer

Most Mordengard warbands rely on high armor, melee prowess, and lots of command. Here's an entirely different type of Mordengard warband that might make you rethink some non-Mordengard strategies as well.

Infinite Shock

Models	Cost
Dwarf Cleric (Commander)	14
9 Dwarf Shock Troopers	54
Human Warrior (reserve)	2
Total:	70

Terrain
4 Sacred Circles

The Set Up (Skirmish)

Use your entire set up area—in a skirmish use the full 8 inches on your edge of the table. Don't clump any of your units together. In fact, deploy each Dwarf Shock Trooper as far from the rest of your Shock Troopers as you can! In chemistry, they call the look you're going for a homogeneously saturated solution.

The Plan

If you've played against a Shock Trooper even once, you know that their one-time 3 damage ranged attack can scare the bejeebies out of people. Played properly, Infinite Shock scares your opponent all game long. Instead of throwing your troops into melee as fast as possible, like most Mordengard armies, Infinite Shock tries to keep its distance, maximizing each Shock Trooper's chance to make its one Elemental Weapon blast count.

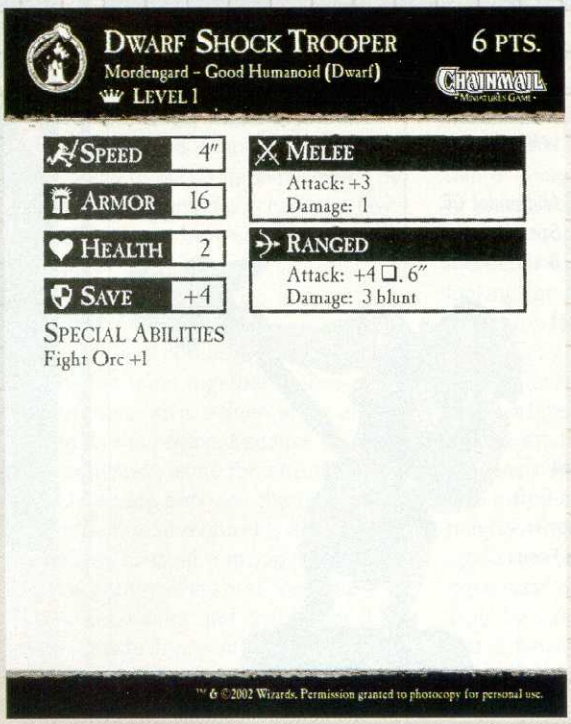
The purpose of the wide deployment is that you don't want the enemy to be able to rush you all at once. You don't have enough Command Points to maneuver your warband into perfect firing positions. If you spread your models out from the very start of the game, even your uncommanded troops who move toward the nearest enemy model or toward the center of the board will be able to maintain some distance from your other troops.

You don't want too much distance from your targets. Your Elemental Weapon attacks only have a range of 6 inches, and your Shock Troopers can move 4 inches and fire. Your best options are to stand and receive a fast moving enemy, or, against an enemy who plays coy, to make steady rolling progress toward a distance which will enable you to move and shoot.

The key to the warband's success is to get clear shots with every one of the Dwarf Shock Trooper's ranged attacks. The key to getting clear shots is to never, no matter how tempted you are, fire into melee.

Under normal circumstances, the Shock Trooper's ranged attack is +4 to hit. Firing into melee, it's effectively +0, even worse if there are other models in between the ranged attacker and the target.

Consequently, if the initiative rolls fail to go your way, and a more powerful enemy model manages to rush one of your Shock Trooper's before you've been able to start firing Elemental Weapons, here's the shocking trick you've got to pull: Spend a command point and move your Shock Trooper away from the enemy. Take the morale save for leaving melee contact, and take the attack of opportunity the enemy will get against you. Even if you lose the Shock Trooper, here's the enemy's reward: They're looking down the barrels of the rest of your Shock Troopers, and you still have two models to move this turn!



Obviously you don't want to pull this stunt if the enemy who has rushed you is someone puny who your Shock Trooper can handle in melee. But if the enemy is using models that cost more than 6 points—and in the *Blood & Darkness* underground combat environment that's likely—trading in one of your Dwarven Shock Troopers for a couple free shots is a bargain.

The good news is that this is a worst-case

scenario. Because you are moving three models at a time, you'll usually be able to get your shots when you want them. Stay patient, accept casualties, and retreat if you have to in order to
wait for a better shot. You'll be surprised at how well this warband can hold its own with warbands that appear more powerful.

And best of all, the Dwarven Shock Troopers don't just dry up and blow away once they've fired their Elemental Weapon. In sections of the battlefield where you're not expecting to do any more ranged attacks, your Shock Troopers can mix it up with the enemy in melee. If your opponent is concentrating on the Troopers who have not yet fired their 1-shot attacks, you might even be able to maneuver a Shock Trooper against an enemy commander.

What Type of Fun Have We Got Here?

This warband is a joy to play. It's quirky, it's capable of great things, and it's even fun to play against. In our experience, games against high-save dwarves armed with 1-shot weapons yield dramatic moments, drastic turnarounds, and exhilarating finishes . . . no matter who wins.

Notes & Options

The cross-faction Human Warrior isn't really necessary, but if you keep him on the back line until the game settles into the Ragnarok melee phase, he can waddle in and provide a timely gang-up bonus or a final hit or two. Alternatively, stick him in front of the Shock Troopers and let him run away from the first melee, taking the hit that might otherwise cost you a Shock Trooper.

Using the Strategy with Other Warbands

If you are playing non-Mordengard ranged attack warbands, are you in the habit of clumping all your ranged attackers together? Try something different, especially when you outnumber your enemy. Try deploying your models widely spread instead of clumped together. This way you get ranged attacks for more turns than if you've put all your archers together.

This might sound counter-intuitive for many "archer-armies," particularly for Ravilla. The Gray Elf Warsinger encourages you to clump your ranged attack elves together in order to get the +2 attack and morale bonus from the Warsinger. But against fast enemies like Abyssal Ravagers or Skeletal Wardogs, grouping together can allow the enemy to catch all your ranged attackers quickly.

So try a Ravilla warband that does not include a Warsinger, and spread it out across as much space as you can find on the battlefield. Try something like this:

All Arrows

Models	Cost
Wood Elf Ranger (Commander)	12
6 Wood Elf Scouts	54
Human Warrior	4
	Total: 70

Terrain

4 Quagmires

Your +28 Scouting Bonus should give you the ten point Scouting check margin you need to change Gloom into normal lighting conditions. Your opponent will try to screw you up by setting up terrain to block as many lines of sight as possible, but choosing quagmires ensures that you can leave central pieces of the battlefield with clear line of sight.

Your warband has only one command point, just enough to let you maneuver one Wood Elf Scout a turn. Therefore your chance for victory is likely to pivot on the terrain your opponent brings to the table and your patience in doing just enough to avoid losing while setting yourself up for eventual clear shots. Aboveground, of course, the conditions would be much more in your favor.

Unlike Infinite Shock, All Arrows strongly prefers the Standard Skirmish scenario. All Arrows might be able to succeed at Pincer Move, and there's no reason to think that it can't fight more or less adequately in Kill the Leader games, but neither Capture and Hold nor Blood Harvest are winning situations for a warband that wants to do nothing but stand as far away as possible and shoot. D

Discover Dragons!
Encounter rare, mysterious, & whimsical dragons in the world's only all dragon catalog!
Unique gifts & collectibles, t-shirts, prints, pewter, & limited edition artifacts.
Dancing Dragon
www.dancingdragon.com
800-322-6040 24hrs.
free catalog!

SEEKING OUT-OF-PRINT TITLES?
NEED THE NEW STUFF TOO?

D&D® 3RD EDITION
d20
AD&D® 2ND EDITION
AD&D® 1ST EDITION
BASIC D&D®

25 YEARS OF TSR... the hit pointe ALL IN ONE SPOT

http://www.hitpointe.com

Mail-order Game Shop
Specializing in Used and Out-of-Print
D&D®, AD&D® and
White Wolf's World of Darkness®
game products.

No computer? Write for current price list:

540 North Lapeer Road, Suite 255
Orion Township, MI 48362

SAGE ADVICE

SEND EMAIL TO:
thesage@wizards.com
SEND SNAILMAIL TO:
"Sage Advice" c/o DRAGON Magazine • 1801 Lind Ave. S.W. • Renton, WA 98055

This month the Sage turns his attention to questions about the Oriental Adventures *book for the D&D game.*

The *Oriental Adventures* book says, on page 58 and 59, that ordinary damage is halved as well as the bonus damage from the skill when you use the Iaijutsu Focus skill to attack an object. What is the corresponding rule in the *Player's Handbook*? Is unarmed damage against objects always halved?

As stated in the FAQ (check out www.wizards.com/dnd for the latest FAQ), ignore the line that refers to half damage on page 58 and 59—it's an error. Objects take normal damage from melee attacks (although many objects have hardness ratings that reduce such damage). Note that objects are immune to subdual damage (see page 135 in the *Player's Handbook*). To deal damage to an object, you either have to take a -4 to your attack roll (which is how you deal normal damage with an unarmed strike), or have the Improved Unarmed Strike feat, or be a monk.

If a character with the sneak attack ability and the Iaijutsu Focus skill enters into a duel and wins the Iaijutsu Focus check, does the damage from Iaijutsu Focus stack with the sneak attack damage?

Yes. Note, however, that you probably won't get a sneak attack in a duel. If there's an iaijutsu duel, the foe will be aware and not caught flat-footed (both characters in the duel have effectively "acted" during the stance and focus phases and are not flat-footed even if they lose initiative in the strike phase), and your foe probably won't be flanked, either.

Is there a limit to the number of times the Falling Star Strike *feat can be used?*

Is there a limit on the number of times per round or per day that the Falling Star Strike feat can be used? For example, my monk uses a flurry of blows against a humanoid opponent and makes three attacks. Could I force three saves against blindness if all three of my attacks were hits? Do I still cause normal damage on a hit as well? (I notice that you inflict no damage when you use the Freezing The Lifeblood feat.)

As mentioned in the FAQ, you can use Falling Star Strike once a round, and each use expends one of your day's allotment of stunning attacks. Unlike Freezing The Lifeblood, a hit with Falling Star Strike inflicts damage.

Does the Improved Grapple feat allow you the opportunity for additional damage on an attack? In other words, if I first strike with an unarmed attack for 1d8 points of damage and then get a grapple check as a free action, can I then deal another 1d8 points of damage if I win the grapple check? Can I start a pin? What about multiple attacks? For example, if I make three melee attacks could I potentially strike with the first blow for 1d8, win a grapple for 1d8 damage, strike with the next blow for 1d8, win another grapple for 1d8, and then strike with the last blow for 1d8 and win the grapple for a pin? If I won the last grapple check could I instead choose to end the grapple?

As stated in the FAQ, the Improved Grapple feat does not allow you to cause damage when you initially establish a grapple using the feat. The benefit of the feat is that you don't take an opportunity attack for initiating a grapple, and you can choose to use the feat any time you hit for damage with an unarmed strike. The Improved Grapple feat is not meant to allow you to deal damage twice with one attack.

When using the Improved Grapple feat, you automatically grab an opponent after hitting for damage, and then you attempt to establish a hold with a grapple check. You do not inflict damage with this grapple check, but once you have established the hold, any further grapple checks you make can inflict damage.

Pinning works the same way as damage. You must first have a hold on your opponent before you can make a grapple check to pin.

When you have multiple attacks and you establish a hold, you can either continue grappling or continue striking. If you choose the latter, any additional

POWER PLAY

Once, Tiwce, Thrice by Stephen Schubert

The Rapid Shot feat grants an extra ranged attack each round, with a -2 penalty to all attacks. But not all attacks in the round have to be ranged. A 1st-level human ranger with 18 Strength and 18 Dexterity could take the Point Blank Shot and Rapid Shot feats, then fight with two daggers and have three attacks in a round: Primary melee attack at +1 (+1 base, +4 Strength, -2 fighting with two weapons, -2 for Rapid Shot) for 1d4+4 points of damage (dagger + Strength), secondary melee attack at +1 (as primary attack) for 1d4+2 points of damage (dagger + half Strength modifier), and thrown attack from Rapid Shot with first dagger at +2 (+1 base, +4 Dexterity, +1 Point Blank Shot, -2 two weapons, -2 Rapid Shot) for 1d4+5 points of damage (dagger, +4 Strength, +1 Point Blank Shot).

POWER PLAY

Medic! by Stephen Schubert

An inevitable side effect of combat is injury. For those parties that tend to get beat up frequently, a *wand of cure light wounds* is much more economical than potions of the same. At standard prices, a charge from a wand is 15 gp (750 gp divided by 50 charges) versus 50 gp for a *potion of cure light wounds*. Even with no cleric in the party, the wand can still be useful, as rangers, paladins, druids, and bards all have the ability to use it. Even a 1st-level rogue could chip in—with 4 ranks in Use Magic Device and a 12 Charisma a 1st-level rogue has a +5 to Use Magic Device skill checks to activate the wand (DC 20).

hold you might establish through the Improved Grapple feat has no effect. If you choose the former, you can progress though the normal grappling sequence (hold to damage or hold to pin). Note that once you pin your foe, there's no point in making any further grapple checks unless you want to inflict damage through grappling.

The example character could strike once, dealing 1d8 points of damage, and then establish a hold with the same attack. The character's next attack could be a normal strike, or it could be a grapple check. If the later, a success could damage the opponent or establish a pin. The third and final attack could be a normal strike, it could establish a pin (if a pin had not been established earlier), or it could be another grapple check that inflicts damage. If you win a grapple check, you can end the grapple.

The *Oriental Adventures* book refers to a feat called Great Throw several times, but there is no feat called Great Throw described anywhere. What does this feat do?

Here's the feat description:

Great Throw [General]

You can throw your opponents to the ground, choosing where they land and dealing damage in the process.

Prerequisites: Improved Unarmed Strike, Dexterity 13+, Dodge, Improved Trip, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: When you make a successful unarmed trip attack against a creature no larger than your own size, you can choose where the creature lands, within the area you threaten. In addition, you deal your normal unarmed strike damage to the opponent. When you use this option, however, you may not make a follow-up melee attack using the Improved Trip feat.

The *Oriental Adventures* book has a list of the shugenja schools and the spells belonging to each school, starting on page 91. I can find no such list for the Isawa school. Can an Isawa shugenja choose another shugenja's school? Is there an Isawa school spell list somewhere else?

Shugenjas of the Isawa school can specialize in any of the four elements, as mentioned on page 27 and page 222. (Shugenjas of the Phoenix clan's Agasha school specialize in fire, and use the school spell list on page 91.)

An Isawa shugenja can choose any spell of her favored element from the shugenja spell list as her school spell at each level. She cannot choose spells that appear on other school's spell lists but not on the shugenja spell list (such as *fireball, soul bind,* or *horse's nose*).

All the hengeyokai in the *Oriental Adventures* book have animal forms that are size Small or smaller. Can a hengeyokai assume a larger size? Can they assume different animal forms?

No, a hengeyokai's animal form and the animal form's size is fixed, as is its hybrid form (see next question).

A hengeyokai in hybrid form has hands (at least after a fashion). What happens when a crane or sparrow hengeyokai assumes a hybrid form? Can they still fly if their wings become pairs of hands? Can they fly as if they had the *fly* spell cast upon them? Do they add an extra pair of limbs to use while still retaining the use of their wings? What size can the hybrid form be?

THE UNSPEAKABLE OAF by John Kovalic

"NOT TO WORRY. AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, ONE OF MY SPELLS IS 'INFLICT MINER WOUNDS...'"

A crane or sparrow hengeyokai in hybrid form has "hands" at the ends of its wings. They can fly at speed 20 (average maneuverability). When flying, the hengeyokai cannot hold a buckler or shield in either hand and can hold only light weapons or objects weighing 6 pounds or less.

All the hengeyokai listed in the *Oriental Adventures* book have Medium-sized hybrid forms.

If a hengeyokai character were to reach one of the levels where an ability score can be increased and were to add that increase to one of his physical ability scores, would the ability score increase also affect his physical score in his animal form? For example, a dog hengeyokai character advances to 3rd level during a campaign and gains an effective character level of 4. He decides to put the ability score increase into his Constitution. In his human form his Constitution score goes up by 1, while in his hybrid form it goes up by 3 (one for the ability score increase and two for the +2 Constitution bonus his subrace receives). But when the character is in animal form does he have a Constitution score of 15 (the value listed on page 12 of the *Oriental Adventures* book) or does the increase boost it up now to a 16 whenever he is in his animal form? How do the ability score increases affect a hengeyokai in all three forms?

First, the character has to have 4 class levels to get the ability boost, not 3. ECL affects the XP you need to earn your next level, but it does not increase your actual character level (you do get a bonus feat for reaching level 3 though). The example hengeyokai can change form 4 times per day (1+ his character level of 3). The Sage examined ECL in some detail back in issue #290.

The physical ability scores for an animal form are fixed—you get the same ability scores no matter what yours are. These scores are shown on Table 1–3 of *Oriental Adventures.*

On the other hand, apply hybrid form ability modifiers to the character's current ability scores, whatever they might happen to be at the time the character assumes the form.

A hengeyokai in human form uses his normal ability scores.

Is it possible for my nezumi character to swing his sword and also make a bite attack if he uses the full attack action? If so, what would the attack modifiers be?

A nezumi can make one natural unarmed attack once per round. This attack can be a bite or a claw attack. An unarmed nezumi can't make two claw attacks and a bite attack with a full-attack action nor a single claw attack and a bite attack. A nezumi could, however, make a normal unarmed attack (as a monk, for instance) and then make an additional bite or claw attack with a full-attack action.

If your nezumi character is using a weapon but has one free hand, he could use a single bite or claw attack as a natural secondary attack. The character's weapon attack would be unaffected, and the bite or claw would suffer a -5 penalty (or -2 if the character had the Multiattack feat). Also, the nezumi could wield a weapon two-handed or carry a weapon and a shield and make a bite attack as a natural secondary attack. The lizardfolk from the *Monster Manual* fights in this manner. See the the Multiple Natural Attacks sidebar in "Lords of the Lost Vale" in issue #292 for a more in-depth explanation.

The dastana and chahar-aina each have an armor check penalty of 1. What armor check penalties do masterwork versions of these items have? What armor check penalty would mithral versions of these items have?

The armor check penalty for any item of masterwork armor is reduced by 1 (see page 113 in the *Player's Handbook*). A masterwork dastana or chahar-aina has an armor check penalty of 0.

Mithral reduces armor check penalties by 3 (see page 243 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The minimum armor check penalty is 0. The reduction for mithral and for masterwork stacks.

Elven chainmail is very light. Can a player combine a dastana and chahar-aina with elven chainmail?

No. You can use dastana or chahar-aina (or both) only over padded, leather, or chain shirt armor (see page 75 in the *Oriental Adventures* book).

If you use a dastana or chahar-aina that has an enhancement bonus, does that bonus stack with or replace any enhancement bonuses the foundation armor might have? If you're also using a magic shield, how does using a dastana or chahar-aina affect that? What happens if the armor and the dastana or chahar-aina both have additional special properties?

When you add a dastana or chahar-aina, you get either the enhancement bonus of the added piece or the enhancement bonus of the foundation armor (not a shield), whichever is bigger; if you add both a dastana or chair-aina, you use the biggest enhancement bonus of the three.

A magic shield's enhancement bonus still stacks with whatever enhancement bonus you're using for the armor you're wearing on your body.

No matter which enhancement bonus you use for the armor you're wearing on your body, you get the benefit of any special armor qualities any of the items you're using have, except that similar qualities don't stack. For example, you wear a *+3 chain shirt of light fortification*, a *+2 dastana of spell resistance (13)*, a *+1 chahar-aina of spell resistance (17)*, and a *+1 shield of heavy fortification*. Your panoply of armor has a total enhancement bonus of +4 (+3 from the chain shirt and +1 from the shield), and you benefit from the heavy fortification and spell resistance (17) qualities of the shield and the chahar-aina.

Is a kappa shell really the shell of a kappa? *Is it just a stylized tower shield?*

According to the *Oriental Adventures* book, a kappa stands 2 feet tall and weighs 20 pounds; however, the armor table in that book says a kappa shell weighs 45 pounds. Is a kappa shell really a shell from a kappa? Is it just a stylized tower shield?

As stated in the FAQ, a kappa shell is really a shell from a kappa, and it really weighs 45 pounds. The kappa is actually larger than described. It should be 3 feet tall and weigh 65 pounds (most of that being its shell).

Say a monk has two tonfas and has 2 unarmed attacks per round, would the second tonfa give a third attack if the monk had the Ambidexterity and Two Weapon Fighting feats? Or would that extra tonfa be included in the base unarmed attacks of 2 per round?

A tonfa is a martial arts weapon, so a monk using one can attack at his unarmed rate. A second tonfa doesn't add any extra attacks, but the monk can use a flurry of blows if armed with two martial arts weapons (see page 39 of the *Player's Handbook*) making the extra attack from the flurry with the second weapon.

Suppose I'm a multiclassed shugenja/wu jen. Does my shugenja's element focus bonus to spell saving throw DCs stack with my wu jen's elemental mastery bonus?

No. As the Sage pointed out back in issue #277, you keep your spell lists and daily spells separate when you're a multiclassed spellcaster. Apply the shugenja's element focus bonus only to the spells the character casts as a shugenja. Apply the wu jen's elemental mastery bonus only to the spells the character casts as a wu jen.

If I'm a multiclassed shugenja/wu jen, do the limitations for my shugenja class extend to my wu jen class? For example, I'm a Unicorn shugenja who specializes in water, so I cannot cast shugenja fire spells. Can I learn *melt* as a wu jen?

As noted in the previous question, the character's two spellcasting classes are completely separate. The shugenja's elemental limits don't extend to other spellcasting classes the shugenja might have.

Can a wizard learn wu jen spells? I understand that a wizard cannot simply choose wu jen spells to learn for free at a new level, but if a wizard found a scroll of *snake darts* written by a wu jen, could that wizard copy it into her spellbook? Could she cast it from the scroll? The scroll descriptions in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* simply refer to arcane spells.

A wizard can learn any spell that's on the sorcerer/wizard list. A wizard cannot learn any spell that is not on the sorcerer/wizard list. Note that there are a few exceptions to both of these statements hiding in the rules here and there; for example, specialist wizards are barred from learning spells from their opposition schools and some prestige classes give wizards access to a few spells that aren't on the sorcerer/wizard list. In any case, *snake darts* is not a sorcerer/wizard spell, so a wizard cannot learn it.

You cannot use a scroll unless the spell is the correct type (arcane or divine) and the spell is on your class list (see page 203 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, where a few more limits to scroll use are explained). *Snake darts* is not a sorcerer/wizard spell, so a wizard cannot cast it from a scroll.

A wizard cannot learn any spell not on the wizard/sorcerer spell list. Note that there are a few exeptions to this rule. . . .

Note that sorcerer characters can use either the sorcerer/wizard spell list from the *Player's Handbook* or the wu jen spell list from the *Oriental Adventures* book, not both. A sorcerer who uses wu jen spells can read any wu jen spell from a scroll (subject to the limits noted on page 203 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), but cannot use scrolls from the sorcerer/wizard list in the *Player's Handbook*.

The description of the *water to poison* spell specifically says the poison DC is tied to the caster's Intelligence, even though a maho-tsukai (who casts spells according to his taint score) casts it. Should all stat-related DCs throughout the *Oriental Adventures* book use the caster's relevant ability score?

In general, a spell's saving throw DC depends on the relevant ability for the caster's class. However, if a spell description specifically says what ability to use (for example *kiss of the toad* specifies Intelligence), use that score instead. On the other hand, a maho-tsukai always uses taint instead of the relevant ability score, even when a spell description specifies an ability.

I have started building a sorcerer/eunuch warlock, level 11/7. It seems that the extra spell level he gains as a 5th-level eunuch warlock is useless, because he should be able to cast 6th-level spells but as an 11th-level sorcerer he doesn't know any. What happens, do I have to lose the extra slot?

If you're a sorcerer, bard, or a member of another class that works with a personal repertoire of spells, you get one spell known (if you need it) when you reach 5th or 10th level. Note that you still can't cast the spell unless you also put one of your bonus spells there or unless you have an ability score high enough to get a bonus spell of that level.

The description of the blade dancer prestige class says that wu jen sometimes become blade dancers, yet a requirement of that prestige class is that the character is of lawful alignment. A wu jen cannot be lawful. Would this mean that only a wu jen who has changed alignments can become a blade dancer?

No. As stated in the FAQ, the blade dancer's alignment requirement should be any non-evil.

If a 10th-level weapon master is surrounded by, say, a bunch of low-level thugs, is it possible to use the ki whirlwind ability in conjunction with an iaijutsu attack if they're flat-footed?

If you can manage to draw the weapon during the same round you make the ki whirlwind attack, yes.

by Johnn Four

SEND YOUR TIPS EMAIL TO:
scalemail@wizards.com

SEND YOUR TIPS SNAILMAIL TO:
"DM's Toolbox" c/o Dragon Magazine
1801 Lind Ave. S.W. • Renton, WA 98055

SEE ALSO:
www.roleplayingtips.com

Campaign Websites

Building and maintaining a simple campaign website is a fun and rewarding project with a wealth of potential benefits for your group. For starters, your players can browse any information that you prepare, which is currently filling all of those binders and notebooks you've got, as often as they wish, at any time, and not just on game days. Also, you can multitask by doing website updates and game preparation at the same time. And because the Web is a visual medium, there is unlimited potential for pictures, maps, and graphics to bring your stories and settings to full-color life.

Websites are inexpensive to create and maintain. Free hosting is easily available, there are no copying costs involved when adding new pages, it only takes a minute to change something if it's wrong, and you can personalize your site to your heart's content so that it suits your campaign's mood, the group's aesthetics, and your DMing style to perfection.

Know Your Goals

Before diving into all the neat things you can do with a website, let's consider briefly who your site is for and what you want it to accomplish. First, there are three potential audiences for your site: the Dungeon Master, the players, and other Internet users. Would you prefer to build a DM-only tool to help track and plan things better, or do you want a resource for your players to turn to for research, help, and entertainment? Perhaps both? Also keep in mind that other Internet users could access the site—decide whether to make things user-friendly for them as well or to keep the group's inside jokes to yourselves.

Your decision boils down to this: a site for your sole use can be plain, simple, and organized exactly the way you think and work, whereas a site that is a resource for your players or the public needs to be easy to navigate, easy to understand, and updated often to keep interest high.

Also, consider that a website can be used as a great tool during sessions if you have a net-enabled computer near the gaming table. This will affect the content you post and how it gets organized for fast access while playing.

By deciding who and what your site is for before you step up to the keyboard and start building, you can avoid wasting your valuable time.

A Tool for the Dungeon Master

One of the great things about a website is that wherever there's a computer connected to the Internet, you have an opportunity to visit your own site to use, read, and plan with. You might be able to surf the net during breaks at work, while waiting at a friend's place, or at the library. Perhaps you found a link to an informative website about medieval castles. Just add it to your links page and now the address is at your fingertips whenever you are on the net and have a few minutes to kill.

One of the most powerful features of a campaign website is the hyperlink. A hyperlink lets you click on a word or phrase that you've specially prepared and takes you to wherever you've planned for it to go. Have you ever shuffled through mounds of papers looking for an NPC's name or tried to find that napkin where you wrote down those cool magic item ideas? Maybe you're trying to flip back and forth between four different places in your notes, piecing related bits together. A link lets you instantly zoom to a Web page of information and return to where you were with the click of a button. That makes finding and using information a whole lot easier and faster—and D&D campaigns certainly tend to accumulate a lot of information!

This is just the tip of the iceberg because you can use links to build valuable directories of instantly accessible information to help you find things more quickly than ever before. For example:

- An NPC list that links to NPC descriptions and statistics
- Map directories that lead to all the maps you've scanned in and uploaded
- Linked directories to all the game world information that you've prepared, like deities, cities, and kingdoms information

Another thing you can do with HTML (HyperText Mark-up Language)—the easy-to-learn programming language that Web pages are constructed with—is quickly build tables and charts. Now you can create all the encounter, magic item, and critical hit charts that you can think of, keep them organized with a simple hyperlink index page, and print them out for use at the game table. It's also fast, fun, and easy to make changes and updates.

A Tool for the Players

Players are busy people just like yourself, but if they get some value from

10 Content Ideas for a DM Only Website

1. Campaign and world maps
2. Campaign or adventure back ground information and history
3. Game rules management: updates, house rules
4. Encounter tables
5. Notes, reminders, to-do lists
6. Character statistics and bios for planning
7. Links to your favorite research and inspirational sites
8. Towns and cities information
9. NPC statistics and information
10. Custom monster statistics and information

your site, they'll be sure to visit often, and your campaign will benefit greatly if you plan things right. In addition to the list of ideas in the sidebars, here are a few special projects that might thrill your players and make your campaign website a guaranteed hit.

Character Creation Guide
Have you seen the *Hero Builder's Guidebook*? It's a great D&D supplement that helps flesh characters out and make them into three dimensional roles for players to get excited about and enjoy playing. Why not create your own? Before your campaign starts, or when a new PC is needed, players can go to the site and read your custom guidelines, such as races allowed, classes allowed, religion information, magic information, official supplements allowed, area maps, political information, and random tables. Feel free to include charts, character questionnaires, bonus tasks, and anything else you can think of to make character creation entertaining and relevant to your campaign.

Research and Clues
Do you cringe when the PCs enter libraries or chat with bards? Save the boring monologue, and post the campaign's histories, legends, and current events to the website instead. Then tell your players to visit the website between sessions. Not only will the players learn and remember more, but they can return again and again, which makes this a perfect opportunity to plant long-term campaign clues, hooks, and goals!

Session Logs
Whether you annotate session events, write a regular campaign newsletter (see "DM's Toolbox" *Dragon* #292), or have one of your players do all of this for you, a session log is a fantastic tool to add to your site. It will help everyone keep events and chronologies straight, and players can return periodically to scour for loose ends, clues, and ideas. Give each session's log a title, like a chapter in a book, to create a special feel.

Rogue's Gallery
This is another fantastic tool that will help players and Dungeon Masters alike. For every NPC heard about or met during play, post some information about them and add their name to a master link list, perhaps divided into "friend," "foe," and "other" sections for fast navigation. Include a picture, game date and session date first met, last known location, a brief biography, and a description. Ask players for their speculations about various NPCs, and add those comments as well. Don't forget to update this section often.

The Grand Tour
Scour the Web for pictures, graphics, and information, and add your own descriptions to create a tour of the PCs' home base, be it a village, castle, or kingdom. Create a series of hyperlinked pages, with linked references to important NPCs, legends, buildings, and so on for players to explore over time as the campaign winds on. Be sure to include lots of mysterious places, interesting NPCs, and strange lore, and hint at many things without giving away any secrets to draw the players in and compel them to initiate their own side-treks and adventures.

10 Content Ideas for a Players' Website

1. Special or custom character creation information
2. Campaign background information
3. Game world information the PCs would know or could learn
4. Session logs or campaign newsletter
5. NPC summaries, descriptions, and pictures
6. Character development assignments and rewards
7. Campaign current events, news, and rumors
8. Magic item lore and legends
9. Maps of places the characters have explored
10. Gaming fiction and art created by the players

Top Three Tips

1. Keeping Information Secret
If you want a shared website with sections that you don't wish the players to see, you can easily create secret pages that only you can find. Unless you link directly to a page from a Web page, your players will never know about or find your secret caches of information. So, only link to pages you want to give players access to, and create and record the names of the other pages for your private use. It often helps to come up with a secret table of contents page for yourself so you can quickly find all of your hidden pages.

You can also come up with a secret Web page naming code. For example, you might create a player's and a DM's version of every NPC, but you name the DM versions with an "xx" added to each page's name. That's easy to remember and use.

2. Update frequently
Be sure to maintain your website and put up new information all the time. It's better to constantly add small tidbits than to make one big update every few weeks. It's also handy to make a "What's New" page to help everyone quickly find out what's been added recently. If you don't update your site often, your players will stop visiting, and you might find that your new Webmastering skills get rusty.

3. Keep it simple
Focus first on posting great content and making finding information as easy as possible before worrying about graphics and other bells and whistles. Keeping your site simple makes it easy for you to update and maintain, and if you want to add flavor and style, use interesting words and other writers' techniques rather than slow-loading graphics and hard-to-read fancy fonts. A simple site full of great information and simple text links beats a half-finished, buggy, and complicated website any day. D

PHIL FOGLIO'S WHAT'S NEW WITH PHIL & DIXIE

ALL IS IN READINESS, O DREAD MISTRESS! AT YOUR COMMAND, WE WILL EXTINGUISH THE HATED SUN!
EX-CELLENT! I ALWAYS LOOK BETTER IN MOONLIGHT!
UH... BUT...
THROW THE SWITCH!
ALRIGHT- THAT'S IT! I'VE HAD IT!
WHAT?
THE INEPTLY EVIL THING WAS CUTE FOR A WHILE- AND THE OUTFITS ARE GREAT- BUT IT'S GETTING TIRED.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN INEPT?
I QUIT.
QUIT?!
THAT'S RIGHT, AND I'M STARTING A WHOLE NEW GAMING STRIP.
ROLL O' THE DICE!
IN THIS STRIP, I'M JUST A NORMAL GUY, LIVING A NORMAL LIFE, WITH A NORMAL SOLAR-POWERED DICE BUSINESS.
KNUCKLEBONE DEL SOL
WHERE THE ELITE MEET TO GET DICE!
SALE!
30
OPEN
I'VE GOT SOME HAPPY, NORMAL EMPLOYEES...
K-8 THE ROBOT GIRL!
MR. FISH!
RING-MASTER DAVE!
NAUGHTY NURSE NANCY!
A NORMAL GIRL FRIEND
AND A LAUGH TRACK!
HAHAHAHAHAHA!!
SO LET'S GET STARTED!
DING!
HELLO PHIL!
HEY, FALKO!
SO- HOW IS THE SOLAR POWERED DICE BUSINESS?
Squirrel!
ZAP!
SNUFF!
... COULD BE BETTER.
HA! LET'S SEE 'MISS NORMAL' FIX THIS!
HAHAHAHAHA!
WWW.STUDIOFOGLIO.COM
URR